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## Hasbro The Next Chapter in Storytelling

### Plus:

- Pokémon Celebrates 20 Years
- A Guide to Licensable Films in Flick Pics
- All the Details of Licensing Expo

An in-depth look at how this toy-driven company continues to evolve into an entertainment, content and licensing powerhouse worldwide.



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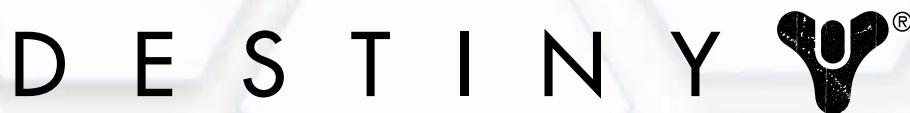
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<sup>1</sup> According to the NPD Group, GFK Chart-Track and Activision Blizzard internal estimates, including toys and accessories. <sup>2</sup> According to the NPD Group, GFK Chart-Track and Activision Blizzard internal estimates. <sup>3</sup> According to the NPD Group, GFK Chart-Track and Activision Blizzard internal estimates, including in-game content sales. <sup>4</sup> NPD franchise sales based on physical unit sales. <sup>5</sup> Based on Bungie internal estimates. <sup>6</sup> Based on Bungie internal estimates.





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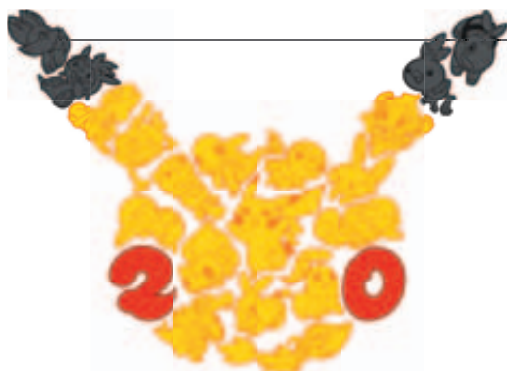
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JOHN FRASCOTTI  
president, Hasbro Brands

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WE'RE NOT JUST A BRAND





# READ, REMEMBER AND REAP

The exclusive articles in this special issue of *License! Global*, the official publication of Licensing Expo, reflect the business trends that will shape the future of licensing.



by **TONY LISANTI**  
global editorial director

It's perhaps a new twist on the three "Rs"—you know Reading, wRiting and aRithmetic. But I assure you that if you read this issue of *License! Global* and incorporate some of the ideas from it into your business, there's a good chance that you will reap the rewards of a good decision with another pretty important "R"—ROI, or return on investment.

For nearly a decade, Hasbro has been methodically implementing a business and cultural metamorphosis to establish itself as a mega global entertainment and licensing company. Now, its strategy is about to take on a whole new dimension as explained in this issue's cover story, "The Next Chapter in Storytelling."

Hasbro's emphasis on content is what is driving its overall growth as a company and as a brand licensing powerhouse. John Frascotti, president, Hasbro Brands, says that "the company is only scratching the surface" of what is possible.

Another example of this similar strategy was revealed in the May issue of *License! Global* with the cover story "Activision Raises its Game," which analyzed how a traditional gaming company is changing to better leverage its franchises through content. Ashley Maily, head of

global licensing, also says Activision is too only beginning to scratch the surface.

These two well-respected companies are textbook examples and show the significance of content across all platforms in today's marketplace, and perhaps give new meaning to the often-used phrase, "content is king." These companies also show how new content initiatives have created greater opportunities for brand extensions from traditional products to innovative co-branding and partnerships.

Following the much-heralded re-launch of the

*Star Wars* franchise, the exclusive interview with Disney Consumer Products and Interactive Media's Josh Silverman provides a glimpse into what's next for world's largest

licensor. DCPI is yet another example of a licensor deeply rooted in developing new content, innovative licensed products and unique partnerships that target new fans.

Inside is also an interview with Pete Yoder, vice president, consumer products, Cartoon Network, which exemplifies how the company is leveraging its portfolio of "offbeat brands" and defining its position in a highly competitive marketplace.

The "Flick Pics" feature sets the stage for upcoming new films and television shows that could drive licensing over the next few years. From more *Star Wars* and new Marvel characters and films from Disney to more *Harry Potter* from Warner Bros. and the next edition of *Avatar*, this feature will paint a picture of which licenses will be hot through 2020.

The special report on location-based entertainment underscores the new initiatives in development internationally and how licensors are extending brands with immersive attractions.

Consider also the smaller niche brands that offer more opportunities than often realized. For example, Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer and Spookley the Square Pumpkin from Character Arts continue to be strong properties and are expanding with new initiatives.

Of course, no discussion on licensing would be complete these days with addressing the YouTube creators who are tailor-made for licensing, the recent executive changes as licensors look for new business opportunities and the entertainment licensing opportunities in China that are about to explode.

Our YouTube article lists 10 of the hottest new content creators that offer potential opportunities in licensing—and it's likely that the names will be brand-new to you.

Also, you may want to note the many new executive changes that include such recent headlines as former Fox Consumer Products executive Jeffrey Godsick leaving the studio to lead Sony Motion Pictures, Roz Nowicki taking the helm at Iconix's Peanuts Worldwide and former Iconix Entertainment executive Leigh Anne Brodsky moving to Discovery.

From a global entertainment perspective, consider the opportunities and changes in China as outlined by Steven Ekstract, group publisher, *License! Global*, in a column based on his recent trip to Beijing.

These are just a few of the many examples of trends in brand licensing and what you need to know, not only as Licensing Expo takes place this month, but also for future growth and opportunities. ©

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WE'RE A MOVEMENT





# TECH DOMINATES BRANDS

The BrandZ annual report reveals the world's top 100 most valuable brands.



by **AMANDA CIOLETTI**  
content and marketing manager

For 11 years now, WPP and Millward Brown have released the annual BrandZ: Top 100 Most Valuable Global Brands study, and the findings are always fascinating, particularly to the licensed consumer products sector.

The study measures brands' equity based on interviews with more than 3 million consumers from all parts of the world that evaluate the general population's perception of any given brand, while also utilizing analysis of each company's financial and business performance.

In the 2016 report, Google reclaims the top spot as the most valuable brand in the world, unseating Apple, which dropped 8 percent in value over the previous year from its No. 1 position in 2015. At No. 3 is Microsoft, which BrandZ reports has a total value of \$122 billion; AT&T is at No. 4 with \$107 billion in brand value (up 20 percent from 2015); and Facebook rounds out the top 5 with \$103 billion in brand value, a 44 percent increase over its 2015 position at No. 12.

The BrandZ study and its data offers all business sectors valuable insight into the global marketplace, predicting influx and downgrades of industries, but it also reflects the overall stability (or lack thereof) of the worldwide economy.

This year, it's important to note that 50 percent of the companies in the Top 10 are technology firms.

According to Millward Brown, "this was a stable year for the world's most powerful brands in the face of global financial pressures, including the economic

slowdown in China," and that innovation and disruption were major trends across all industries.

Says the report: "Brands of all kinds moved to build a multi-faceted ecosystem around the consumer's needs and desires, often by diversifying into new categories."

Another fascinating finding from the report? Apparel is a fast-growing category again. According to the BrandZ study, the category rose 14 percent this year to \$114 billion. Brands such as Nike (up 26 percent) and Under Armour (new to the report) brought added value to their brands through new premium offerings, the incorporation of technology such as heart monitors into their clothing and the integration of sportswear with apps to add to the consumer experience.

Other brands also capitalized on technology to innovate consumer experiences—and it worked.

The Starbucks brand, for example, rose an impressive 49 percent over 2015, largely in part due to its incorporation of a consumer-friendly "touch and go" app and expanded food and beverage offerings, says BrandZ.

Amazon, which moved up 59 percent with a total of \$99 billion in brand value, also invested in its technology and customer service, building up its logistics network using independent contractors, according to the BrandZ study, to enable the company to offer one-hour delivery options and the production of its own content.

"By stretching their brands in innovative ways and expanding into new categories, the strongest brands in the Top 100 are increasing their penetration and their relevance in people's day-to-day lives," says Doreen Wang, global head of BrandZ, Millward Brown. "There is a risk in doing this, however: It blurs the lines between categories and can leave brands struggling for identity. Defining and articulating a very clear positioning and purpose will play a more crucial part than ever in building a strong, distinct brand."

"The brands that thrive, regardless of sector, are those that behave like challengers and adopt disruptor models and mindsets," says David Roth, chief executive officer, EMEA and Asia, The Store WPP. "They're shaking up other categories with innovation that goes beyond new products or technologies—transforming the way a service is delivered, enhancing the consumer experience or changing a format. The power these brands already hold, combined with the strength of their platforms, is enabling them to quickly and successfully move across sectors."

To view the report in full, visit [www.BrandZ.com/Mobile](http://www.BrandZ.com/Mobile). ©

## Top 10 Most Valuable Brands 2016

2016 Rank	Brand	Brand Value (\$B)	Brand Value Change	Business Category	2015 Rank
1	Google	\$229.2	32%	Technology	2
2	Apple	\$228.5	-8%	Technology	1
3	Microsoft	\$121.8	5%	Technology	3
4	AT&T	\$107.4	20%	Telecoms	6
5	Facebook	\$102.6	44%	Technology	12
6	Visa	\$100.8	10%	Payments	5
7	Amazon	\$99	59%	Retail	14
8	Verizon	\$93	8%	Telecoms	7
9	McDonald's	\$89	9%	Fast Food	9
10	IBM	\$86	-8%	Technology	4





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# Diageo's Baileys, Guinness Taste New Extensions

Beanstalk, the exclusive licensing agency for Diageo, the company behind brands such as the premium Irish alcoholic beverages Baileys and Guinness, is continuing to expand the product portfolio for the company by adding several new lifestyle and gift extensions for both brands. With 40 global licensees already on board for the Diageo program, Beanstalk, which has managed the program since 2014, is adding to that roster with recent deals.

With an established consumer product program underway for Baileys that includes ice cream, chocolate and coffee creamers, Beanstalk is taking the Baileys brand even deeper into adjacent categories such as sweet treats and expanding the flavor options and distribution for its coffee creamer products.

Due to the liquor's distinct flavor profile of Irish dairy cream, Irish whiskey, cocoa and vanilla, Baileys lends itself organically to a range of confectionery products, a category the company has invested in for more than 15 years and that is embraced in over 30 countries. The current Baileys sweet treats line includes collaborations with partners such as Unilever for Baileys Magnum ice cream and General Mills for Baileys Häagen-Dazs ice cream.

But officially licensed partnerships are not the only place that Baileys is finding resonance with consumers.

Diageo says that DIY recipes are also booming for the brand and could even possibly end up on retail shelves.

"We love that consumers experiment with Baileys and post their creations to social media," says Declan Hassett, senior licensing manager, food, Diageo. "These recipes are

a testament to the versatility of the Baileys flavor profile, demonstrating how easily Baileys can extend to chocolate, desserts, ice cream and coffee. Fan-based DIY recipes inspire the ways in which we think about our existing and future licensing programs."

For the first time ever, Baileys will also launch a seasonal coffee creamer flavor in the U.S. Longtime licensee HP Hood will debut a limited edition Hazelnut Caramel Blondie flavor, which will join the 14 other variants available year-round and three other seasonal holiday products. The new flavor hit retailers early this year.

In Europe, Baileys has teamed with dairy producer Arla to create two new products—Baileys Pouring Cream and Baileys Extra Thick Cream. The items launched at European grocery stores during holiday 2015 and were supported by a promotional campaign that included in-store sampling events at 51 U.K. supermarkets.

Down under, Diageo, with the assistance of Beanstalk, extended Baileys even further with more ice cream flavors available for distribution at Australian independent stores and supermarkets such as Woolworths and Coles. Flavors like burnt toffee and chocolate, as well as Baileys cream and custard from partner Bulla, hit the market last fall as an exclusive holiday item.

According to Hassett, forward initiatives for the brand include testing for almond milk-based Baileys desserts.

Looking to Guinness, Beanstalk is building on the existing savory food extensions for the brand.

In North America, licensee High Liner Foods recently released Guinness BBQ-glazed Atlantic salmon for distribution at Costco



wholesale retail locations across the U.S.

"The association with Guinness and seafood is longstanding," says Hassett. "The natural saltiness of seafood naturally complements the malt, roast, caramel creaminess of Guinness."

Other extensions for the brand include a chilled steak slice collaboration with U.K.-based pie and pastries manufacturer Holland's Pies for the convenience store market, which hit stores in April. (This is building on the existing Holland's Pies program that is sold at major grocers throughout the U.K. including Tesco, Sainsbury's and Morrisons.)

And AB World Foods has created a Guinness-inspired table sauce that will fully roll out across the U.K. late this year. It is currently served as a table top condiment at 36 O'Neill's pubs and in major Irish grocery stores such as Spar & Centra, Supervalu and Dunnes.

Says Hassett: "We will continue to showcase our brewing credentials by releasing some interesting beers developed in our pilot plant in St. James's Gate while also focusing on delivering great looking and great tasting Guinness draught wherever consumers are looking for great beer. To support our robust portfolio of proteins and snacks, we will be launching an even broader portfolio of licensed food that showcases the complex and delicious taste of Guinness, including appetizers and desserts.







## ‘Thunderbirds Are Go’ Launches in U.S. via Amazon

U.K.-based ITV Studios Global Entertainment has partnered with Amazon to debut its new original kids’ series “Thunderbirds Are Go” in the U.S. via Amazon Prime.

Produced in partnership with Pukeko Pictures and Weta Workshop, the new series is a re-invention of the original “Thunderbirds,” and will follow the five Tracy brothers as they pilot their Thunderbirds vehicles across various environments and locations to perform rescues across the globe.

To promote the series’ launch, Amazon brought a first look of the series to March’s WonderCon event with a “Thunderbirds Are Go” panel that featured voice actors David Graham, David Menkin, Andres Williams and head writer Rob Hoegee.

Amazon will also showcase the series at San Diego Comic-Con in July, supporting it with a panel event and extensive branding within its booth.

In addition to bringing the new series to the U.S., the brand’s licensed consumer product program will begin to roll out next year.

“Launching ‘Thunderbirds Are Go’ in the U.S. marks a significant step forward in our global strategy for the brand,” says Trudi Hayward, senior vice president and head, global merchandise, ITV Studios. “Amazon Prime is proactively backing the show and the early reaction has been extremely positive. Now, with this strong foundation in place, we’re looking forward to building a robust merchandise program for the market and offering fans across the U.S. an innovative range of ‘Thunderbirds Are Go’ products.”

Elsewhere in North America, Canada’s DHX Media has acquired the series and launched it on-air in April.

Finally, outside of North America, the series has been picked up in more than 40 countries and key markets including the U.K., Europe, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Brazil and the Middle East. It has also secured more than 75 worldwide licensees across multiple categories.

## Iconic Fat Cat Garfield Signs with King Features

King Features, a division of Hearst, has inked a deal with Paws, Inc., to represent arguably the world’s most famous overweight feline, Garfield.

King Features will look to extend the Garfield property in select categories in the U.S. Initial categories under King Features’ remit include apparel and accessories, art books, art prints, gaming and slot machines, giftware and novelties, beauty, direct-to-retail programs and co-branding and cross-branding initiatives.

“King Features continues to grow its licensing division, and Garfield is a fabulous fit with our portfolio of classic characters,” says Carla Silva, vice president, general manager and global head of licensing, Hearst. “As Paws, Inc., begins to ramp-up fun activities to celebrate Garfield’s big 40th anniversary in June 2018, we are delighted to help extend the paw print for Jim Davis’s signature brand into new consumer product categories.”

King Features has already locked in several new licensees for the brand including 2 Monkeys for t-shirts for young men and boys; Body Rags Clothing Co. for men’s, women’s, junior’s, youth boys’ and youth girls’ knit tops and bottoms; and Sneakerskins for decorative coverings for shoes. Additionally, Zynga has launched a Garfield social slot game within its “Spin it Rich” app on Facebook and on mobile, and Bottleneck Gallery has sold-through its first collection of Garfield art prints.

“It’s great to have a fresh perspective on the Garfield brand, which King Features brings to the table,” says Jim Davis, president, Paws, Inc., and creator of Garfield. “King has been reinvigorating their classic properties with a youthful urban vibe. Garfield will benefit from their expertise and we’re excited to be working with them to enhance our program going forward.”







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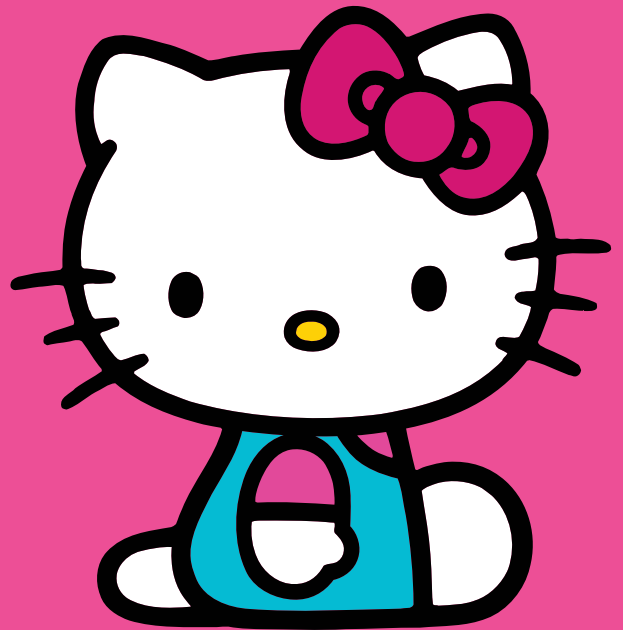
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# Jim Henson Debuts Robust Portfolio

The Jim Henson Company is continuing to broaden its licensed product offerings for its growing portfolio of brands, bringing new extensions to market for properties such as “Dinosaur Train,” “Word Party,” “Splash and Bubbles,” “Dot.” and the evergreen “Fraggle Rock.” Henson is also celebrating an anniversary year for the cult-favorite film *Labyrinth*.

Now in its fourth season, “Dinosaur Train” has sealed broadcast distribution in more than 200 territories around the world, including PBS Kids in the U.S., Disney Channel in Germany, ABC Australia for Australia, Netflix for global SVOD rights, France Televisions in France and many more.

Master toy partner Jazwares has been locked in and will debut a range of new items this fall at mass and online retailers in the U.S., followed by select international markets and an even broader international rollout for spring 2017.

“Our ‘Dinosaur Train’ line of products from master toy partner Jazwares ranges from figures and play sets to role play and plush, giving our young fans vast opportunities to engage in the brand in a myriad of ways,” says Federico San Martin, vice president, global consumer products, The Jim Henson Company. “Our focus is to create product that is fresh, creative and innovative, and that translates the fun and edutainment aspects of the series into products kids will love.”

Additional licensees on board for the brand include Buy Seasons for party goods (the U.S.), California Costumes for Halloween costumes (the U.S.), Rail Events for live shows (the U.S.), Fun Stickers for stickers (the U.K.), Gedea Labels for mealtime products (Germany), TV Mania for apparel and accessories (Germany), Evrika

for chocolate eggs (Russia), Giochi Preziosi for food and premiums (Italy) and Warm Up Industry for costume character live appearances (Italy).

The property is further supported by a network of global agents such as Bulldog Licensing for the U.K., Biplano for France, LizenzWerft for Germany, CPL for Latin America, Megalicense for Russia, Jantar Projekt for Poland and Maurizio Distefano Licensing for Italy.

“The ‘Dinosaur Train’ re-launch program is strong and growing on a global scale,” says San Martin. “To complement these licensees and expand the ‘Dinosaur Train’ world, we are seeking partnerships in the games and puzzles, sleepwear, oral care, FMCG and arts and craft categories, to name a few. Our longstanding licensees are thrilled with the brand re-launch and welcome new partners to expand the array of products available to consumers.”

New for Henson is “Word Party,” a vocabulary building show that utilizes proprietary CG animation from Henson Digital Puppetry Studio, that will debut on Netflix in July in the U.S. and in other global territories where the SVOD network is available.

Another new property for the company is “Dot,” a new animated series based on the debut picture book from tech expert and author Randi Zuckerberg. “Dot.” hits U.S. broadcaster Sprout in September.

For both, Henson is looking to grow the consumer product programs at Licensing Expo in Las Vegas, Nev., this month.

“‘Word Party’ is a vocabulary building show for very young kids and, as such, lends itself to being a very ‘toyetic’ property. We anticipate partnering with an array of licensees across key categories, from toys and publishing to games, puzzles and music, and given the amazingly cool products and opportunities currently in the marketplace, we will definitely look to creatively expand our category options,” says San Martin.

For “Dot,” San Martin anticipates categories such as toys, apparel and publishing to lead the product program, which will target girls, ages 4 to 7. Secondary categories such as stationery, electronics and more will follow.

Henson is also unveiling an all-new



animated series in November on PBS Kids in the U.S., “Splash and Bubbles,” which is a co-production with Herschend Enterprises. The series, which consists of 40 episodes, will look to the undersea world to teach children about marine species and ocean phenomenon.

Accompanying the new series is a suite of digital offerings including games, apps and parent/educator resources, which will roll out this fall as well. San Martin says that the property’s initial consumer product launch strategy will include anchor categories such as toys, publishing and apparel, but will evolve eventually to include adjacent extensions for bath, arts and crafts, summertime and outdoor play and accessories, health products and more. The range is expected to debut at retail in 2017.

Evergreen brand “Fraggle Rock” is still performing strong for Henson and has signed several new licensees in the U.S. including Super Impulse for novelty, Toy Factory for prize redemption and Funko for collectibles. These partners join Zen Monkey Studios (apparel and gifts) and Trevco (print on-demand).

Finally, Henson is rolling out the red carpet for the 30th anniversary of *Labyrinth*, the classic cult film that stars David Bowie and Jennifer Connelly alongside Henson’s creature creations.

In honor of the anniversary, Henson has signed multiple new partners to support the brand including Insight Editions for a commemorative book; River Horse for a game; Truffle Shuffle for apparel, ceramics, bags and prints; Funko for collectibles; Card Corporation for debit cards; Toy Vault for plush, novelty and games; and Boom Entertainment for publishing.

Additionally, Sony Pictures Home Entertainment will host a limited engagement theatrical run in the U.S. through Fathom Events, Sept. 11 and 14. A limited edition anniversary Blu-ray gift set will also be available immediately following the theatrical release.





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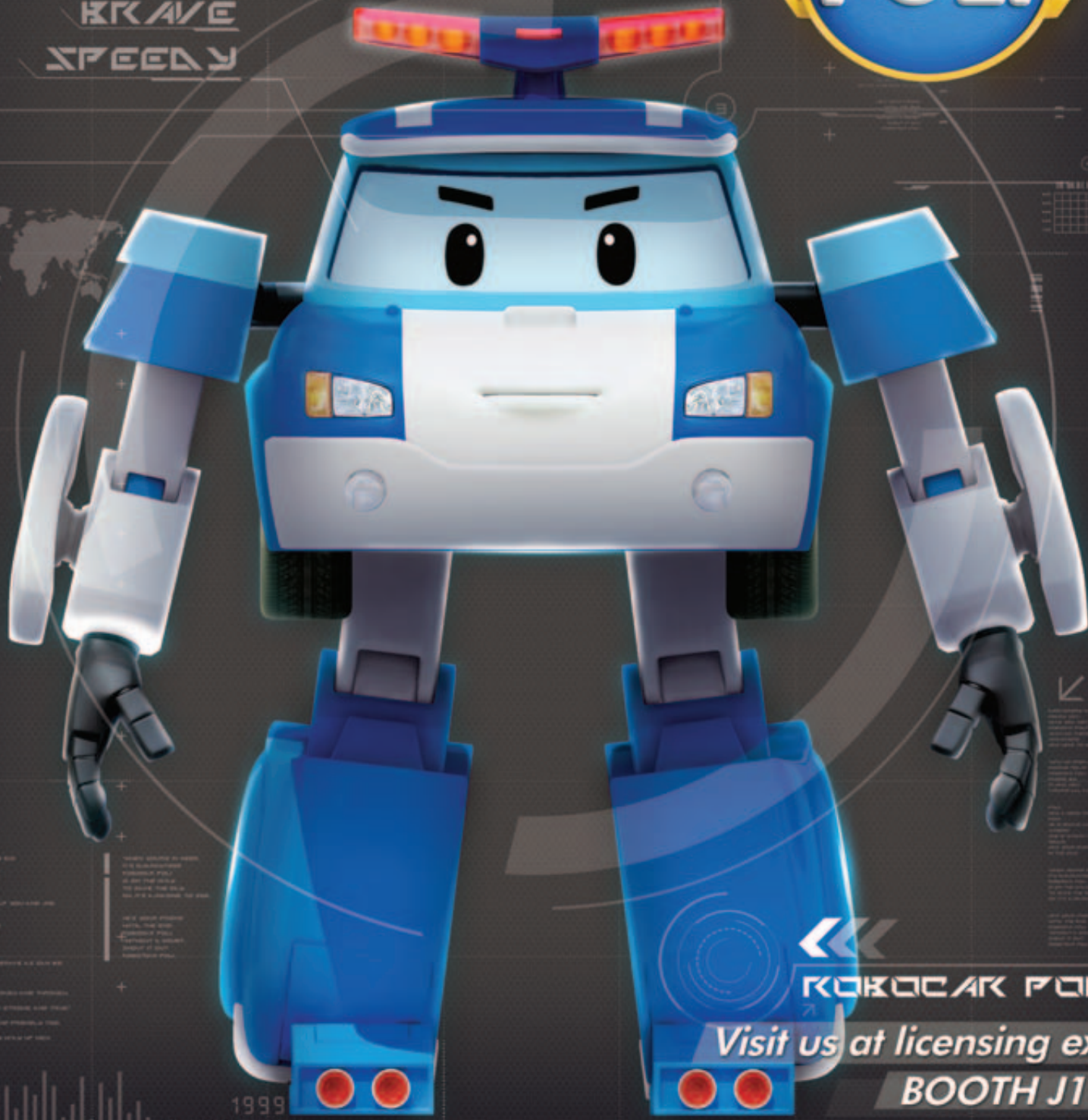
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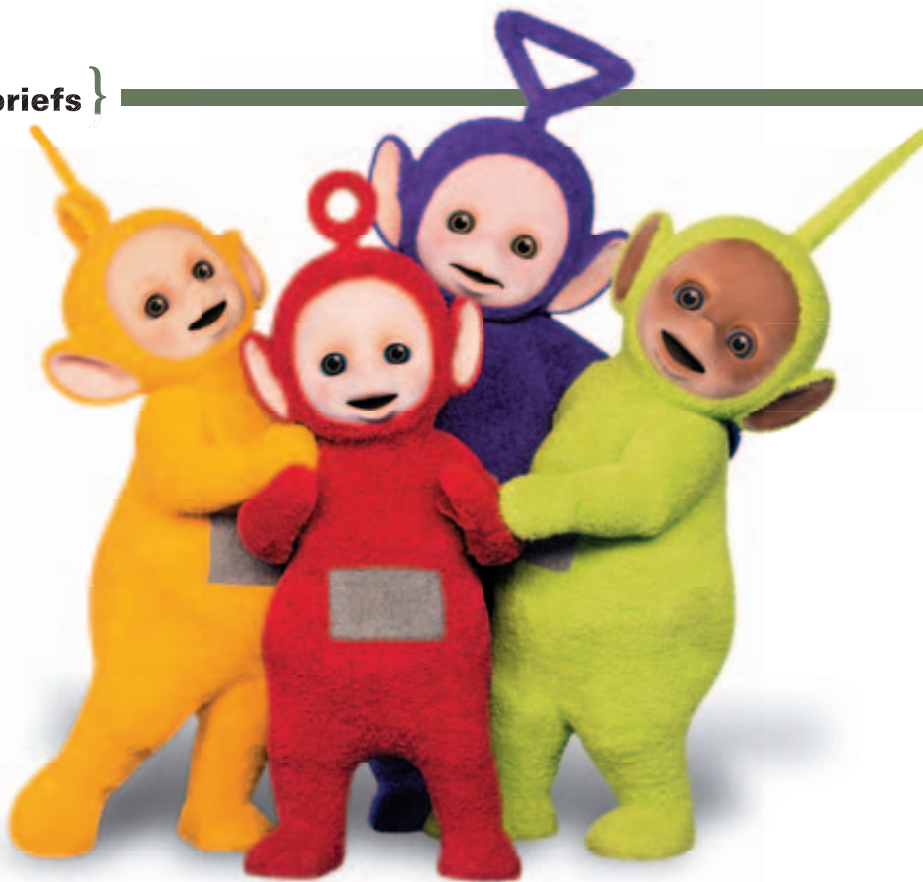
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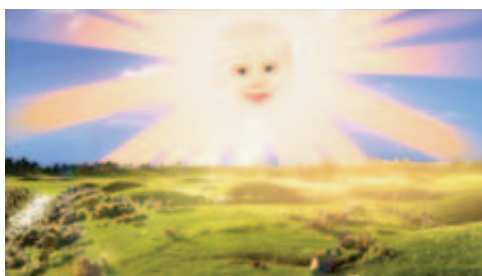
## ‘Teletubbies’ are Back

After nearly a 15-year hiatus, DHX Media has brought the “Teletubbies” back to airwaves and most recently launched the series in the U.S. on Nick Jr. with an expansive consumer product program following in the coming months.

The rebooted series was acquired by DHX Media in 2013 and features 60 new, 12-minute episodes. Staying true to the original series, the same classic characters—Tinky-Winky, Dispy, Laa-Laa and Po—will again return, but the new series will include subtle updates such as the Teletubbies’ new touchscreen tummies.

The series will also highlight several new elements including a Tubby phone that brings the Teletubbies up-to-date with current technology.

“It is almost 20 years since the huggable ‘Teletubbies’ were first launched, and so it is the perfect time to revitalize the property



for a new digital generation of toddlers,” says Kaisa Nieminen, senior brand manager, DHX Brands. “The new show embraces current technology and features engaging and related new elements for today’s youngsters, such as the Tubbies’ touchscreen tummies, the Tubby custard ride and the fun Dup Dup lift inside Home Dome, yet retain all the familiar and much-loved ingredients of the original series.”

A consumer product program for the series is already underway with more than 65 worldwide licensees signed on.

In North America, Spin Master has been named as the master toy partner. DHX has also tapped VTech for electronic learning aids; Accessory Innovations for bags, backpacks and hats; SG Company for footwear; Franco Manufacturing for bedding; Betesh for toddler bedding; and Cube for apps.

The new “Teletubbies” merchandise is slated to launch this fall in Canada and next spring in the U.S.

DHX Media has also partnered with Noggin, Nickelodeon’s video subscription service for preschoolers, to add the classic “Teletubbies” library to its content slate. The first two seasons of the classic series are available now with the remaining episodes rolling out in coming months.

## NYC Licensing Summit Sets 2017 Dates



The NYC Licensing Summit will return to Manhattan on March 2-3, 2017, in a new, larger location, following the success of this year’s sold out event.

Developed by *License! Global* magazine in conjunction with the International Licensing Industry Merchandisers’ Association and UBM Americas (organizer of Licensing Expo and Brand Licensing Europe), the 2017 NYC Licensing Summit will take place at the Marriott Marquis hotel in the heart of New York City’s Times Square.

“The positive response to the inaugural NYC Summit earlier this year was overwhelming,” says Tony Lisanti, global editorial director, *License! Global*. “There is clearly a strong demand for an event like this that brings together the licensing sector’s thought leaders in an intimate setting designed for networking and knowledge sharing. We’re looking forward to expanding the event next year with another top-tier slate of speakers and even more networking opportunities.”

The 2016 inaugural NYC Licensing Summit, which took place in early March in Manhattan’s Financial District, featured more than 18 distinguished speakers from companies including Target, Global Brands Group, YouTube, the NFL, Nickelodeon, Beanstalk, Hasbro, Cherokee Global Brands and more.

More details on the 2017 NYC Licensing Summit will be announced in the coming weeks. To take advantage of early bird registration and stay up to date on other developments, sign up for e-mail updates at [www.LicenseMag.com/NYC-Summit](http://www.LicenseMag.com/NYC-Summit).



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# 'Beyblade' Bursts Back into Entertainment, Toys

Sunrights, the New York-based entertainment arm of Japanese production company D-Rights, is bringing back its "Beyblade" franchise for a new generation.

Created and launched by TOMY Company in 1999, the original franchise included seven TV series, two movies and three spin-off

TV series that were broadcast in more than 80 countries, and featured a companion toy battling range.

The new animation, "Beyblade Burst," will re-imagine the classic story to include new characters, stories and competitions, and is set to hit the U.S. and Canada later this year. The production is a partnership with OLM, with Canada-based studio Ocean Productions creating a localized version of the animation to "ensure that children in Western markets relate to the storyline and connect with the characters," says Sunrights.

"We're very excited about the new series because we think the theme is much more relatable for kids," says Natasha Gross, marketing director, Sunrights. "The previous generations of the series were much more fantastical and a bit darker, but this iteration is about competition, real sports and how to maintain your friendships, all while set in an elementary school. It is a lot lighter than the previous series."

The new series will still build on the competitive, interactive nature of the entertainment with the brand's real-life toys, and Sunrights has tapped Hasbro to introduce the new collection of toys in North America later this year. (Hasbro was a licensee for the brand in 1999 and 2008 for the first two generations of the toys.)

Already introduced in Japan last summer, the "Beyblade Burst" toy range features a dynamic "burst" element that adds a new, exciting edge to playful battles. Further enhancements to the range include stadium play sets and accessories, as well as a digital component.

Broadcast distribution for "Beyblade Burst" is still under negotiation, however the series has begun airing in Japan on TV Tokyo.

Sunrights has additionally begun to structure a global network of licensing agents to represent and grow the brand around the world.

Televix Entertainment is on board to represent the brand for broadcast and merchandising in Latin America; m4e has been tapped to represent "Beyblade Burst" for licensing and broadcast in Germany and German-speaking Austria and Switzerland; and Ink Group will manage the brand in the Nordic region, Central Eastern Europe, Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States.

"I am very excited about these partnerships and to watch 'Beyblade Burst' grow globally in the Western market," says Daizo Suzuki, president, Sunrights.

To further bolster the team behind the brand, Sunrights has been busy building its internal team. Suzuki was recently brought on board at Sunrights to helm the company's U.S. operation, and an internal licensing team, managed by Gross, has been built up to continue to grow the "Beyblade Burst" brand, supported by two licensing coordinators (Shana Ditkovich and Mia Yamashiro), as well as a regional sales consultant (Emiko Takeda).







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# Hello Kitty Expands in EMEA

Sanrio has stepped up its brand building activity for Hello Kitty across the EMEA region over the past several months with a slate of immersive activations.

First, in April, Hello Kitty appeared at two cherry blossom viewing events at the LVMH-owned Jardin d'Acclimatation in Paris, France, and the Kungsträdgårdens in Stockholm, Sweden. At each event, the classic character appeared with cosplayers, martial artists and musicians to introduce attendees to the Japanese springtime tradition.

At the MCM London Comic Con in May, Sanrio debuted Hello Kitty's Superhero Hanami. The activation allowed fans to experience a Hello Kitty-themed Japanese garden, take photos by Mount Kitty, pose under a Hello Kitty torii gate, build Sanrio avatars and tend to the Hello Kitty zen garden.

The Hello Kitty Superhero Hanami will continue to tour Comic Cons in other European cities over the next six months.

Additionally, the activation also showcases Sanrio's lazy egg character, Gudetama.

Earlier this month, the summer-

long Hello Kitty pop-up café opened in London, which was created in collaboration with the London-based bakery Cutter & Squidge. The pop-up café will serve themed afternoon teas in a secret garden environment, as well as sell a range of limited edition merchandise and takeout food items.

Meanwhile, Florence, Italy, will become the first European city to host a permanent Hello Kitty café, the Hello Kitty Patisserie, which is slated to open this summer.

Hello Kitty will also appear on a variety of sweet treats across Europe with new partners including Dots (Euro Pastry), Dunkin' Donuts in Germany, Annabel Karmel and Candy Kittens.

This month, Sanrio, across EMEA and Australasia, will participate in the company's global character ranking, giving fans the chance to vote for their favorite characters as well as discover new ones.

Finally, Hello Kitty will appear in the UEFA Champions League next season. Sanrio is also planning to launch Hello Kitty branded Gi later this year with the Moya Brand, a martial arts brand that sponsors a number of athletes.

## Leigh Anne Brodsky Joins Discovery

Leigh Anne Brodsky has stepped down as managing director of Iconix Entertainment's Peanuts Worldwide to assume the role of executive vice president at Discovery Communications' Discovery Global Enterprises unit, where she will oversee consumer products, location-based entertainment and global program sales.



**LEIGH ANNE BRODSKY**  
*executive vice president, Discovery  
Global Enterprises*

Brodsky joined Peanuts Worldwide in 2013 and oversaw the company's global business, establishing the largest retail presence for Peanuts in the brand's history, according to Iconix. She also expanded Iconix's global entertainment portfolio after leading the acquisition and re-branding of Strawberry Shortcake just last year to maximize its merchandising potential.

"Leigh Anne is the perfect executive to lead Global Enterprises with the goals of driving incremental revenue, broadening reach and deepening connections with our viewers," says Paul Guyardo, chief commercial officer, Discovery Communications. "We're fortunate she's joining our team."

Before joining Iconix, Brodsky was the president of Nickelodeon Consumer Products, where she oversaw parent company Viacom's global licensing and merchandising business, which includes brands such as "SpongeBob SquarePants," "Dora the Explorer," "Blue's Clues," Comedy Central's "South Park" and MTV's "Jersey Shore." She was also instrumental in the company's acquisition of the "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles" property, and under her leadership, Nickelodeon became a multi-billion dollar retail licensing entity.

In 2011, Brodsky was inducted into the International Licensing Industry Merchandisers' Association's Hall of Fame. She is also a twice-elected member of the LIMA Board of Directors, where she serves on its charity fundraising committee.



A promotional poster for the TV series Game of Thrones. The background is a dark, textured stone wall with a grid of rectangular niches. In each niche, a character's face is visible, looking down with a somber expression. The characters are arranged in a 2x2 grid in each of the three rows. The top row shows Ned Stark and Arya Stark. The middle row shows Sansa Stark and Jon Snow. The bottom row shows Eddard Stark and Arya Stark. The title 'GAME OF THRONES' is centered in the middle row, with the Iron Throne symbol replacing the word 'OF'.

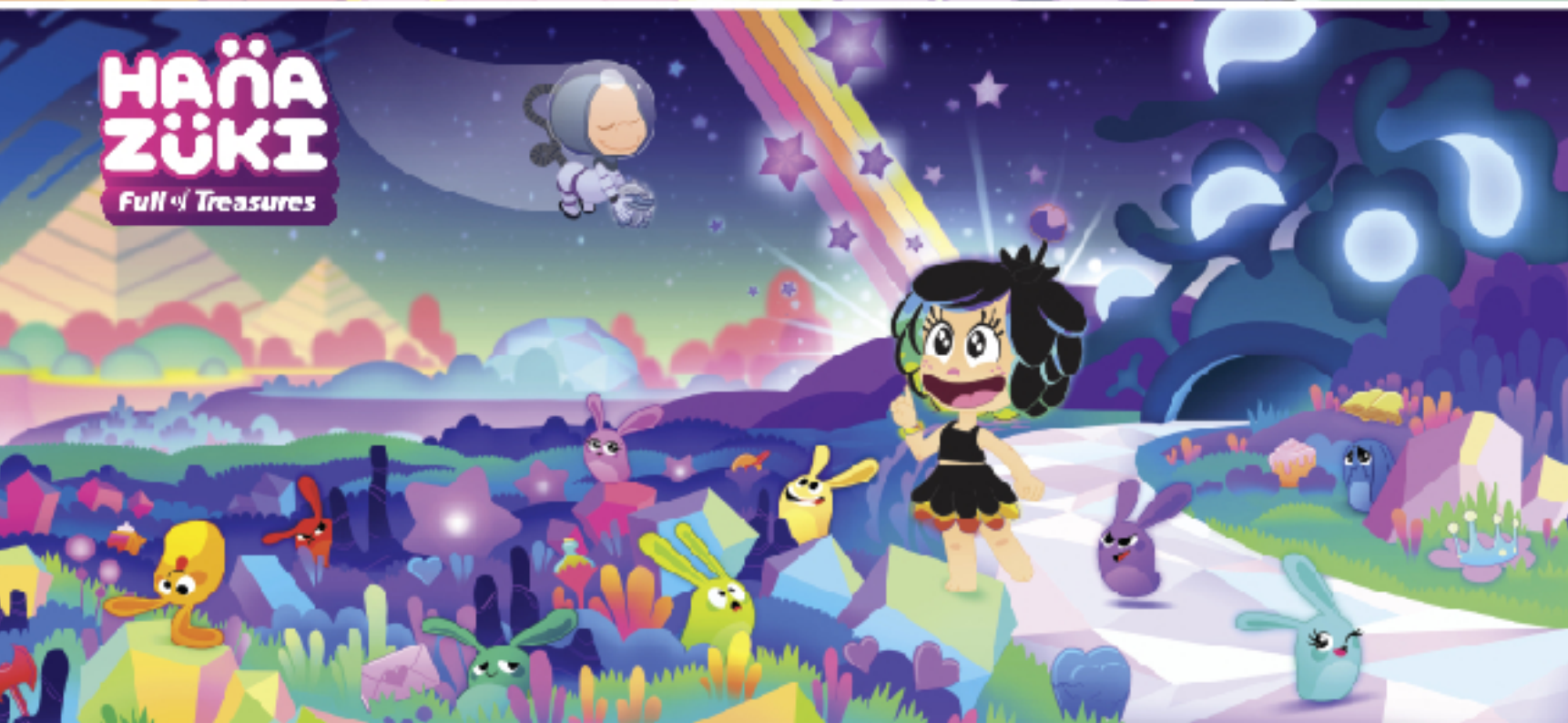
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# ‘Wissper,’ ‘Mia’ and ‘Tip’ in the Spotlight for m4e

Entertainment company m4e is heading into the latter half of 2016 with three animated children’s series that it will continue to build product programs for around the globe.

Brand-new for m4e is “Wissper,” a preschool series for young girls, ages 4- to 7-years-old, that centers on the titular character Wissper and her very special ability to talk with animals.

“Wissper” is a co-production with London-based animation studio Absolutely Cuckoo, and is broadcast in the U.K. by Channel 5 Milkshake, Nick Jr. in the U.S., Discovery Kids in Latin America, SVT in Sweden and YLE in Finland, with 50 more countries also on board.

The licensing program for the property is already taking shape. Master toy partner Simba Dickie will develop a range of toys based on the series for Europe; while German publisher Bastei Media will support the property with publishing, games and apps. Additional licensees include Sodirep Textiles for apparel and accessories for G/A/S and Benelux and Herding for home and living products in G/A/S. According to m4e, more partners are currently in negotiation.

Animated series “Mia and me” continues to be a winner for m4e as it readies to debut its third season in 2016/2017.

Launched in 2015, the original animated series is broadcast in more than 80 countries, reaching record viewership numbers in territories such as Germany where the show reaches up to 1.3 million viewers and enjoys a market share of 71 percent of girls, ages 6 to 9, says m4e.

Mattel holds the international licensing rights for the property in the toy category, and m4e says the program is continuing to grow with more than 150 licensees such as Egmont, Panini and Schmidt Spiele producing over 1,700 products all around the world.

The fourth season of the series is already in development, as is a “Mia and me” feature film, which will further support the brand globally over the next several years.

Lastly, m4e has animated preschool series “Tip the Mouse” in its global portfolio.

“Tip the Mouse” is a co-production between m4e, Studio Bozzetto & Co., Giunti Editore,



Studio Campedelli and Rai Fiction, and is based on the children’s books

of the same name by author Andrea Dami. The book alone has sold more than 10 million copies and been translated into 32 languages.

On air since 2014 in more than 50 countries, “Tip the Mouse” follows sly little mouse Tip who lives with his family in a small village in the corner of a meadow, close to the world of humans.

Master toy partner Simba Dickie launched its first collection of toys based on the brand in spring 2015, and worldwide publishing is handled by Italy-based Giunti Editore. Other licensees for “Tip the Mouse” include Panini for magazines, Herding for home and living products, Vivid for plush, Clementoni for educational games and puzzles, Novartis for promotions and MSZ and TIGA Entertainment for home entertainment.







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# License! Global

## Launches LicenseTV, a Video News Platform

License! Global is proud to announce the upcoming launch of LicenseTV, a free video news platform that will join the magazine's suite of digital and print offerings.

The new, web-based video news offering will make its debut at Licensing Expo, June 21-23, in Las Vegas, Nev., on screens throughout the show as well as on the new online hub [www.LicenseMag.com/LicenseTV](http://www.LicenseMag.com/LicenseTV). (License! Global is the official news partner of both Licensing Expo and Brand Licensing Europe.)

"Our goal is the same as it has always been—to be the leading source of news and insights for the global brand licensing sector," says Steven Ekstract, group publisher, License! Global. "By expanding into the video realm, License! Global will provide more innovative information to the global licensing industry than ever before, with exclusive content and access to leading executives in the sector. And what better place to make our debut than at the industry's leading event, Licensing Expo?"

At launch, LicenseTV will feature a full slate of interviews and informative talks with leading executives from Global Brands Group, Hasbro, Target, the NFL, Sequential Brands Group, Cherokee Global Brands, Hot Topic and more. Topics will range from how to reach Millennials to analysis of the changing retail landscape and insights into how to create product that sells.

A teaser video for a sneak peek at what's in store is now available at [www.LicenseMag.com/LicenseTV](http://www.LicenseMag.com/LicenseTV).

# Sequential Brands Buys Gaiam

Sequential Brands Group has agreed to acquire the fitness brand Gaiam for approximately \$146 million in cash.

As part of the transaction, Sequential will acquire Gaiam's yoga, fitness and wellness product business, which includes the Gaiam and Spri brands. The acquisition will integrate into Sequential's active division, which is currently anchored by the And1 and Avia brands.

According to Sequential, the purchase is expected to add

approximately \$22 million in revenue and \$20 million of adjusted EBITDA on a full-year run-rate basis. Post closing, Sequential's total guaranteed minimum royalties are expected to increase from approximately \$360 million to more than \$500 million.

"We believe this is a home run for Sequential," says Yehuda Shmidman, chief executive officer, Sequential. "The acquisition is immediately accretive to earnings, and aligns with our long-term playbook of acquiring

brands with significant, untapped potential where we can immediately unlock value and position them for long-term organic growth."

Sequential has also signed long-term licensing agreements with Fit for Life and High Life for Gaiam's core categories, which will become effective upon closing. Fit for Life will be the licensing partner for hard goods and equipment categories, as well as digital properties; while High Life will be the licensing partner for Gaiam's yoga and athleisure apparel business.

"The combination of Gaiam's innovative products and authenticity in the active lifestyle space, coupled with Sequential's extensive retail relationships and strategic approach to brand building sets the stage for taking both the brands to new levels," says Lynn Powers, chief executive officer, Gaiam. "I am happy to be working with Sequential and the Fit For Life and High Life teams to ensure the culture of the Gaiam brands live on and grow."





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# Angry Birds

## Adds to the Flock



On May 20, Rovio premiered its first feature-length film for the “Angry Birds” franchise—*The Angry Birds Movie*. To complement the 3D animation, which is based off of Rovio’s mobile game phenomenon, arguably the first mobile title to launch to super-stardom, the company rolled out a robust and innovative consumer product program across multiple categories.

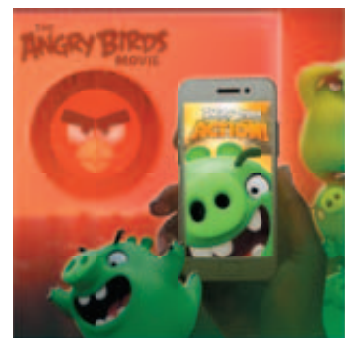
True to the franchise’s roots, the program kicked off in April with a free-to-play digital arcade game, “Angry Birds Action!,” a mobile title that the company calls “a whole new kind of 360 entertainment experience.” Enhancing the game in the real world are BirdCodes, rewards that are printed on products and packaging from partners such as LEGO, Pez and H&M that earn users in-game features such as new content, power-ups and more.

“We’re taking advantage of the huge fan base for the ‘Angry Birds’ gaming franchise with the launch of the movie-based game, ‘Angry Birds Action!,’ which came out in April,” says Darren Kyman, head of retail and new business development, North America, Rovio Entertainment. “It’s been a great tool to market the movie, and we have done some great partnerships within the game including LEGO and Pez.”

Rounding out the program is a more traditional consumer product

program that spans a wide range of categories, from toys and games to homewares, apparel and party goods.

“Our licensing partners recognized immediately the significant consumer appeal of this highly anticipated film,” says Kyman. “We made sure that the merchandise provides consumers many cool, new ways to engage with their favorite feathered friends and bring the *Angry Birds* story world to life.”



Leading the flock in North America is LEGO with its collection of six building sets based on the film. Licensee Spin Master has also been tapped for a range of collectible figures, play sets and games that Kyman says is “non-traditional and more action-based, integrating the movie storyline, but also staying true to the game play” aspect of the umbrella brand; while retail partner H&M has joined the product program and created an exclusive line of children’s apparel.

Hasbro has signed on for a *The Angry Birds Movie*-branded Chutes and Ladders game, Commonwealth for plush, World Tech Toys for drones, SCS Direct for outdoor play products and Kid Designs for electronic accessories. Hybrid and Freeze have created t-shirts and hooded sweatshirts, Accessory Innovations released backpacks and lunchboxes, World Trade Jewelers produced craft jewelry and The Moret Group is making branded socks. Other apparel licensees include Handcraft (children’s underwear) and Komar Kids (pajamas and robes).

For publishing, HarperCollins is the master partner in the category and has been tapped for print books, while National Geographic, Centum and Sellers Publishing are also taking part in the consumer product program.

Rubie’s Costume Co. is on board for film-based costumes for kids and adults; Inkology has dropped pencils, plush pens, notebooks and binders; and Dr. Fresh created branded toothbrushes and mouthwash.

Additional licensees taking part in the film push include SunStaches, Bulls I Toy, Jay Franco, Painting Lulu, Kurt S. Adler, Thermos, York Wallcoverings, Radz, Primary Colors, Decopac, Yowie and many more.

According to Kyman, the film offers Rovio’s latest crop of licensees more diverse assets than ever before.

“What’s different about this program for us is that we had a classic program that was based after the characters in the mobile game—for example there were no feet or wings,” says Kyman. “But with the movie and the CGI-animated look, we’re able to bring the characters to life like never before by really giving them a personality.”







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# Cherokee Signs Five New Partners

Cherokee Global Brands has secured four new licensees for its Cherokee brand in the U.S., and added a footwear partner for Everyday California.

First, SaraMax Apparel will design items such as Cherokee women's intimate apparel, girls' underwear and men's and boys' underwear for distribution at mass merchants, through e-commerce, at department stores and at specialty chains in the U.S.

High Point will create a line of Cherokee socks, slipper socks, tights, legwarmers, leggings and more for all ages. High Point's products will be sold in national and specialty chains, mass merchants, department stores and through e-commerce.

Cudlie Accessories will manufacture a range of diaper bags, lunch bags, backpacks and feeding, grooming and bath accessories. The company will distribute the Cherokee-branded products to department and specialty stores, mass merchants and via e-commerce.

Eastman Footwear will produce a range of men's and boys' outdoor, casual and athletic footwear. Eastman Footwear's Cherokee-branded products will be available at mass merchants, e-commerce, department stores and specialty retailers nationwide.

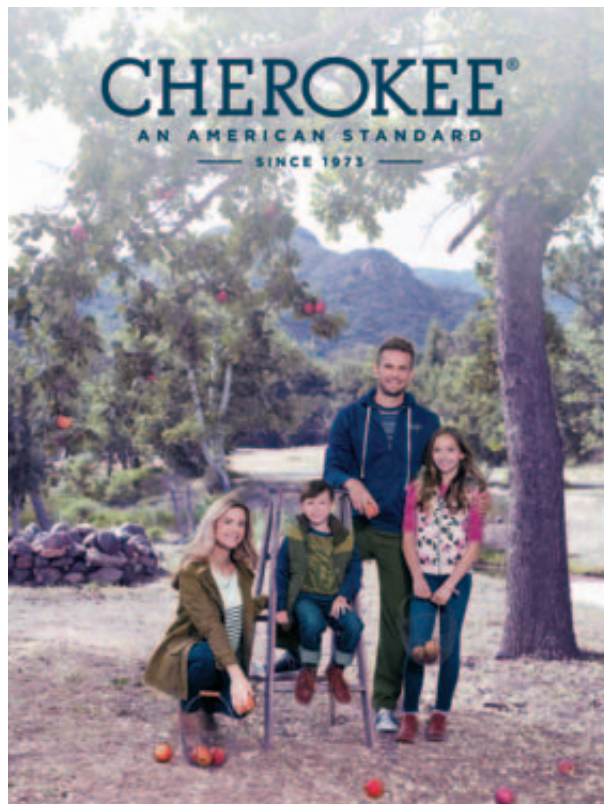
"We are very excited to announce our second phase of strategic partnerships, which will strengthen and grow our U.S. domestic licensee base for our namesake Cherokee brand," says Henry Stupp, chief executive officer, Cherokee Global Brands. "These partnerships will allow us to continue to satisfy the consumer demand for the Cherokee brand while supporting further category and distribution resources for ladies' apparel, ladies' and girls' footwear, adult and children's accessories, home textiles and room décor—expect additional announcements in the near future. As we continue to build our domestic licensee base, we have identified and have begun to onboard new retail partners that will ensure the continued availability of an expanded assortment of Cherokee-branded products for spring 2017."

Finally, Cherokee Global Brands has tapped Saliluz, a division of Cobian footwear, to create a collection of casual footwear under the company's Everyday California brand.

The new collection will be co-developed by Cobian and Flip Flop Shops, a subsidiary of Cherokee Global Brands, and will include branded men's and women's casual footwear and flip-flops.

"We acquired Flip Flop Shops last fall with plans to identify and pursue innovative licensing opportunities that synergize our portfolio. The Everyday California footwear collection created by Cobian will be the first of many partnerships that leverage our brand assets and relationships with respected category leaders," says Howard Siegel, president and chief operating officer, Cherokee Global Brands. "Everyday California and Flip Flop Shops are lifestyle brands that are known for quality, comfort and living life to the fullest. Cobian is the perfect partner to deliver on that promise."

The footwear range is slated to launch next spring and will be distributed in Flip Flop Shops.



# Nowicki Joins Iconix

Rosalind Nowicki has stepped down as executive vice president of global sales and retail at Twentieth Century Fox to take on the role of managing director at Iconix Entertainment's Peanuts Worldwide, a



**ROSALIND NOWICKI**  
managing director, Peanuts Worldwide

position vacated by Leigh Anne Brodsky who left for Discovery Communications. (See page 30.)

In her new role, Nowicki will oversee the entertainment division and will lead the Peanuts Worldwide team, which released the animated *The Peanuts Movie* last year, and continues to roll out new short-form animation content.

She will also be integral in planning and executing the company's growth strategy for Strawberry Shortcake, which includes a recent partnership with DHX for the development of a new TV series.

Prior to joining Iconix, Nowicki served as the executive vice president of global sales and retail at Twentieth Century Fox. In that role, Nowicki oversaw the consumer product strategy for Fox's TV properties such as "The Simpsons" and "Empire," as well as films including *Ice Age*. She also served as executive vice president at 4Kids Entertainment, where she oversaw the re-invigoration of "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles," Cabbage Patch Kids and the launch of "Yu-Gi-Oh!"

"Roz is an industry leader with extensive experience in strategically building out established entertainment properties," says John Haugh, president and chief executive officer, Iconix. "She will be a valuable asset as we continue to carefully manage and oversee the growth of Iconix's entertainment business."



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# Macy's, Ryan Seacrest Dress up for the Olympics

Producer, host and radio personality Ryan Seacrest has partnered with Macy's to launch an exclusive fashion collection inspired by Rio de Janeiro and the 2016 Summer Olympic Games.

The 13-piece collection, Ryan Seacrest Distinction Rio, includes a variety of sportswear clothing and accessories including shirts, polos, shorts, a windbreaker, a fedora, espadrilles shoes and a duffle bag.

"The idea for the Rio collection was inspired by the upcoming 2016 Rio Olympic Games,

which I am lucky enough to be hosting live late-night on NBC," says Seacrest. "The Rio collection is a reflection of the city's excitement, spontaneity, vibrant culture, and of course, the liveliness of the games."

The limited edition collection will be sold exclusively in 150 Macy's stores and on Macys.com beginning June 15.

"Rio de Janeiro is an effervescent city with an incredibly rich culture steeped in music, art and celebration of life, making it an excellent host for the 2016 Summer Olympic Games," says Durand Guion, vice president and fashion director, men's, Macy's. "The Rio capsule collection for Ryan Seacrest Distinction embodies this joie de vivre in a coolly sophisticated way, offering a range of trend-right designs perfect for discovering everything the famed city has to offer."



# Fox's Godsick Moves to Sony

Jeffrey Godsick has stepped down from his role as president, Fox Consumer Products, to join Sony Pictures Motion Picture Group as executive vice president, worldwide partnerships.

In the new role, Godsick will lead the creation and execution of global promotions strategies for Sony's films, according to *Variety*.

Godsick has lead Fox's consumer products division since October 2011, where he oversaw the activities and licensing for Fox's film and TV properties.

He also oversaw Fox's transformation from a traditional licensing model into a global, 360-degree lifestyle brand by leveraging Fox's properties in multiple ways including high-end designer collaborations,

niche products, live shows, theme parks and a variety of promotional initiatives.

Additionally, while at Fox, Godsick spearheaded the company's global expansion by taking *Ice Age* to Russia with a major retail partnership, establishing an office in Singapore to further expand throughout Asia, planning the first Fox-branded theme park in Malaysia and building a network of top licensing agents to establish Fox's consumer products program in key countries and local markets.

Godsick originally joined Fox in 1995.

He has also held various marketing positions at the company and worked on campaigns for films such as *Rise of the Planet of the Apes*, *Rio*, *Avatar* and more during his tenure.



**JEFFREY GODSICK**  
executive vice president, worldwide  
partnerships, Sony Motion Picture Group



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# Sesame Takes on YouTube

Sesame Workshop has launched its new YouTube channel, Sesame Studios, to create native content designed specifically for the digital platform.

The channel will showcase new, non-Muppet characters, short-form series and original stories. Each video will focus on curricular areas such as health, literacy and social-emotional development, with three videos uploaded each

week. Marvie, a new digital puppet character, will “host” the channel and encourage kids to interact with the content as they watch.

The Sesame Studios creative team will also partner with digital stars and creators, such as singer, songwriter, actor and YouTube star Todrick Hall. Other creative talent working with the channel include Vsauce Network, Mystery Guitar Man, Jon Burgerman, The Pop

Ups, Justin Yu and Khoa Phan. “We’re thrilled to build upon the ‘Sesame Street’ legacy as we partner with amazing talent around the globe to build Sesame Studios,” says Kay Wilson Stallings, senior vice president, creative development, Sesame Workshop. “Our partners benefit from our creative and child development expertise, and we are able to reach new audiences. Our goal is what it’s always been: to engage



children with compelling, meaningful content.”

Sesame Studios content can now be viewed on the main YouTube channel or on the “YouTube Kids” app.



## WBSCP Powers Wonder Woman Cosmetics

Warner Bros. Consumer Products, in partnership with DC Entertainment, has partnered with retailer Walgreens for an exclusive collection of cosmetics and accessories featuring Wonder Woman.

The new line features Wonder Woman’s signature colors of red, white and blue, and includes a range of cosmetics including lipstick, lip balm, eyeshadow and eyeliner, as well as nail polish sets, beauty sets and more.

The collection also includes accessories such as a four-piece hair accessory bundle, five-piece makeup brush set and a makeup tote.

The Wonder Woman Beauty Collection is available now exclusively at select Walgreens stores in the U.S. and online.



## Ellen DeGeneres Decorates Bed Bath & Beyond

Ellen DeGeneres has partnered with home goods retailer Bed Bath & Beyond to launch the ED Ellen DeGeneres bedding collection.

The new collection will reflect DeGeneres’ personal style and design aesthetic and features six bedding patterns for comforters, duvet covers, sheets and more. The collection also includes decorative pillows. The range is licensed and manufactured by Revman International.

“We are excited to exclusively offer our customers the ED Ellen DeGeneres bedding collection and to be working with a talent of Ellen’s caliber,” says Art Stark, president, Bed Bath & Beyond. “The collection appeals to our customers who are looking to update their home with quality, well-designed bedding inspired by Ellen’s design aesthetic.”

The ED Ellen DeGeneres bedding collection is available now at Bed Bath & Beyond locations and online.





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# 10 HIGHLIGHTS OF EXPO

Now in its 36th year, Licensing Expo will return to Las Vegas with a slate of new brands, well-known favorites and innovative features that touch on current trends in the industry. Here are the top 10 things you don't want to miss.

by ERICA GARBER

## A Playful Keynote

On the first day of Licensing Expo, June 21, executives from three top toy companies will open the show with the keynote panel, "Toys to Content: Where Do We Go From Here?" The 8 a.m. keynote will feature Simon Waters, general manager and senior vice president, entertainment and consumer products, Hasbro; Laura Zebersky, chief commercial officer, Jazwares; and Susie Lecker, chief brands officer, Toy Box division, Mattel. Marty Brochstein, senior vice president, industry relations and information, International Licensing Industry Merchandisers' Association, will moderate the panel.

The three executives will discuss content creation within the toy industry, as well as provide insight into where the industry is and where it is heading. The keynote is free to all Licensing Expo attendees and exhibitors.

## Digital Media Licensing Summit

Now in its second year, the Digital Media Licensing Summit will take place on June 20, the day before the show opens, and is free to all Licensing Expo attendees. Starting at 11:45 a.m., the Summit is designed to help licensors, licensees and retailers navigate and take advantage of existing and emerging opportunities that digital content and different platforms offer.

The event will also be held in conjunction with Licensing University,

which is organized by LIMA, Licensing Expo's sponsor.

A series of panels and seminars that include top executives from Paladin Software, YouTube, United Talent Agency and Fullscreen, among others, will give attendees an in-depth look at online content creators and how they leverage success on platforms such as YouTube, Vimeo and Vine.

## Licensing University

As always, LIMA has assembled the best of the industry for four days of seminars designed to help licensing professionals at every stage take their business to the next level.

This year, Licensing University will feature more than 25 different sessions covering topics ranging from crowd-funding and licensed app development to retail strategies and the legal implications of licensing.

LIMA will also continue its roundtable series with 17 short, interactive discussions that will allow attendees to engage in small group discussions with experts on topics like 3D printing, how to negotiate a deal and more.

## Opening Night Party at Tropicana

Sponsored by LIMA and in association with the National Football League Players Association, the Opening Night Party will head to a new location this year. Taking place at The Havana Room and Sky Beach Club at the recently renovated Tropicana Las Vegas at 8:30 p.m., the evening networking event will include entertainment by Winter Dance Party, which is a tribute to music icons Buddy Holly, The Big Bopper and Ritchie Valens, courtesy of C3 Entertainment.







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## Honoring Long-Time Exhibitors

This year, Licensing Expo will celebrate the brands and companies that have exhibited at the show for 20 or more years. Companies such as Sony Pictures Consumer Products, Mattel, Joester Loria Group, Warner Bros. Consumer Products, Hasbro and Nickelodeon will receive a commendation recognizing their tenure. All of the companies will also be featured on Licensing Expo's social channels, as well as in the *License! Global Show Dailies*.

## Matchmaking Service

Hosted by UBM Licensing, organizers of Licensing Expo, the brand-new matchmaking service connects attendees and exhibitors via a searchable online platform that will also allow both parties to arrange meetings.

The service, which is free to all attendees and exhibitors this year, will also be accompanied by hands-on matchmaking professionals who will be available on-site in the Matchmaking Lounge to answer questions.

## NFLPA Sports Activation Zone

In addition to exhibiting at the show, the NFLPA, via its licensing and marketing arm NFL Players Inc., will showcase a first-of-its-kind, immersive activation zone to connect licensees with NFL players as well as give attendees the opportunity to join the fun and compete for prizes by going head-to-head with professional athletes in an array of games, photo opportunities, video game challenges and more.

## International Brands Take the Stage

This year's show will feature country-specific pavilions for China, Taiwan, Brazil, Mexico, El Salvador, Korea and Malaysia. Each regional pavilion will serve

as a commercial center for each country and will showcase a range of licensing activity from that region.

Additionally, China ACG Group will now oversee the China Pavilion and will provide several can't-miss events during the show including an opening ceremony and seminar on Chinese animation and licensing. For more information on all pavilions, see story on page 64.

## Targeted Pavilions Come Together

Licensing Expo will also host other niche pavilions this year, including the brand-new Geek Culture Pavilion. The pavilion is a designated floor space for companies in the horror, monster, cult film and comic-specific space. Companies participating in the new space include Lugosi Enterprises, Synthesis Entertainment, Lon Chaney Estate and Famous Monsters of Filmland.

Another niche pavilion is the Non-Profit/Heritage Pavilion. This pavilion is a dedicated space for companies in the non-profit and heritage sectors to come together to further benefit their causes. Companies joining this space include Boy Scouts of America, The Henry Ford Museum, LMCA and Wildflower Group, among others.

## Highlighting the Arts

The show floor will also include a number of activations highlighting the work of art and design brands. This year, the Art & Design zone will showcase a live painting demonstration by Robert Holton from Drizzle Studios! and performance art by Stephen Fishwick (represented by Get Down Art), who will be painting to live music several times a day, and more. The zone will also feature the New Artists Launchpad initiative, which will give emerging artists the opportunity to share the spotlight. This year, the initiative will feature Bottled Joy Creations, Susanne Kasielke, Kristina Vardazaryan and RiverLights Originals, among others. ©



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# 10 NEW EXHIBITORS YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS

This year, Licensing Expo will host an impressive lineup of approximately 100 new exhibitors. Here are 10 you don't want to miss. **by ERICA GARBER**

## **Cosmopolitan – Booth #G108**

As a part of one of the largest magazine publishing companies in the world (Hearst Magazines International), *Cosmopolitan* is published in more than 60 countries and reaches an audience of 120 million through various touch points each month.

With a past presence at Licensing Expo courtesy of its licensing agent IMG, *Cosmopolitan* is marking 2016 with its first-ever designated booth to further extend the women magazine's brand.

Over the past several years, Hearst has been developing its global product licensing business and has seen success with deals for *Cosmopolitan* including the launch of a fragrance last year, as well as branded phone and tablet cases in the U.K.

"Hearst is one of the largest and most diverse media, information and service companies in the world, with some 360 businesses in more than 150 countries," says Adam Cooper, publisher and international licensing director, Hearst Magazines. "Product licensing is a relatively new business within this mix, and Licensing Expo will help us highlight our licensing program, make new connections and ideally, develop new product lines."

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### Iconix Brand Group – Booth #G124

This premier brand management company may be familiar to many within the licensing industry—after all, the company does boast a portfolio of some of the leading global consumer brands across fashion, sports, entertainment and home.



The company has participated at the show in the past under its Peanuts and Strawberry Shortcake brands, but now with the new leadership of chief executive officer, John Haugh, the company is aiming to innovate and highlight their brands in new ways.

In addition to its Peanuts and Strawberry Shortcake brands, at Licensing Expo 2016 Iconix will also showcase Candie’s, Danskin, Ed Hardy, Joe Boxer, Mossimo, Mudd, Sharper Image and Zoo York, among many others.

“Iconix’s presence at Licensing Expo is the premier opportunity to embrace the growing industry and showcase the capabilities of our best brands, connecting with our business counterparts across the globe,” says Carolyn D’Angelo, executive vice president, brand management, Iconix. “We will continue to share the legacy of our brands with a new generation, and to focus on enhancing authentic relationships with both new and existing partners at the show. The conversations had and connections made at Licensing Expo are invaluable to us as we are always looking for new ideas and partners to help us continue to grow and evolve.”



### Lawless Entertainment – Booth #L241

In addition to handling the licensing and merchandising campaigns for its clients, Lawless Entertainment also creates, co-produces, distributes and markets animated and live action programming for both film and TV.

The company is also the exclusive North American licensing agent for the “Geronimo Stilton” brand, which has recently expanded its offerings with a new apparel range from MyLocker, and represents other brands such as Suzy’s Zoo, Eddie is a Yeti and many more, all of which will be showcased at the show.

### J!nx – Booth #J96

Founded in 1999, J!nx is an apparel and accessories company that currently produces product for more than 35 different licensees, including its in-house J!nx brand.

In May, the company partnered with Blizzard Entertainment to create a line of apparel based on Blizzard’s upcoming video game “Overwatch.”

The company will be showcasing apparel and lifestyle products representing the full portfolio of J!nx brands and the product lines they’ve created including “Halo,” “Minecraft,” “Portal” and “World of Warcraft,” among others.

“We hope to have a chance to tell our story and connect with brands that have a story to tell as well,” says Zac Schuffham, director, licensing and business development, J!nx. “We would also like to demonstrate the ways we approach product development and how we represent a unique space in the industry.”



### Loot Crate – Booth #B99

Since launching in 2012, Loot Crate has garnered a subscriber base of more than 400,000 “looters.”

Dedicated to a sense of community, interactivity and mystery that the founders fell in love with at events like San Diego’s Comic-Con, each month the company ships a themed mystery box of the best geek, gaming and pop culture gear from top brands such as *Star Wars*, “Super Mario,” “Fallout,” Pokémon and many others.

At this year’s show, the company will showcase five crate options including its original Loot Crate, Loot Anime, Loot Gaming, Loot Pets and its Lvl Up crate.





**National Breast Cancer Foundation – Booth #H90**

Recognized as one of the leading breast cancer organizations in the world, the National Breast Cancer Foundation’s primary goal is to help women by providing help and inspiring hope to those affected by breast cancer through early detection, education and support services.

“Many successful companies are looking for reputable charities to partner with for effective cause marketing campaigns, such as promotions during Breast Cancer Awareness Month,” says Danae Johnson, senior director, development, National Breast Cancer Foundation. “We hope Licensing Expo will lead to new partners who want to join us in our mission of ‘Helping Women Now.’”



**The Ohio State University – Booth #J87**

The Ohio State University is a Top 20 ranked university with more than 64,000 students, 500,000 living alumni and more than 2 million followers on Facebook.

The university boasts its own independent licensing program and ranks third in brand equity nationally among public universities. According to The Ohio State University, it is also the No. 1 revenue-producing collegiate licensing program. To-date, the licensing program for the company has generated more than \$130 million in royalty revenue from approximately \$1.3 billion in licensed retail sales.



**Ninja Division Publishing – Booth #E79**

As the publishing arm of Soda Pop Miniatures, a creative design studio serving the global hobby games community, Ninja Division Publishing produces board games, card games and hobby models.

The company boasts a diverse catalog of tabletop games including Super Dungeon Explore and Ninja All-Stars, as well as games for licensed properties including *Alien vs Predator*, all of which will be highlighted at the show.



**Yi Animation – Booth #Q252**

Yi Animation is a digital entertainment company from China that creates and produces original animation works. At this year’s show, the company will exhibit its “Kung Food” TV series. The series follows a group of Chinese food characters, each with their own unique set of skills, who become Kung Fu masters and travel to different countries across Asia, Africa and Europe.

As it makes its formal debut at the world’s largest licensing marketplace, Yi Animation will showcase, as well as pursue, licensing deals in categories including apparel, toys and games. ©



**Pierre Cardin – Booth #E124**

This year, PCL International will make its debut at Licensing Expo under the Pierre Cardin brand, which also includes a magazine published by the Aydinli Group, and will aim to extend the well-known fashion brand into new retailers and new territories.

PCL International is a subsidiary of Aydinli Group, which is one of Turkey’s leading companies in the ready-to-wear sector with 450 retail stores and more than 1,000 points of sale throughout the world.

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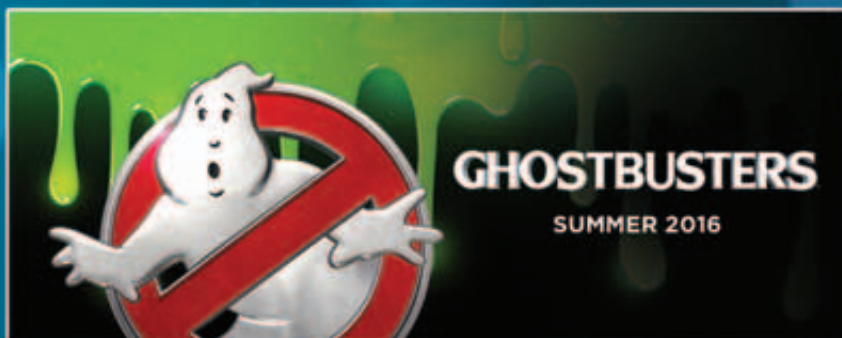
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# SEE THE WORLD

Licensing Expo will welcome the world to Las Vegas once again with new country-specific pavilions and expanded exhibits.

by ERICA GARBER

As it heads into its 36th year, Licensing Expo has expanded its global reach by increasing representation for its international exhibitors and brands.

This year, Licensing Expo will host more than 700 international brands as well as a raft of exhibitors from 33 different countries.

Furthermore, Licensing Expo has expanded its International Pavilion offerings with a new booth from Taiwan and increased representation from countries including China, El Salvador, Korea and Brazil, among others. Each pavilion will serve as its own commercial center, offering a full range of licensing activity, whether it be brands from a specific country looking to license or resources for licensors looking to bring their brand into that region.

In coming years, the show will continue to add more international pavilions as Licensing Expo continues its own expansion.

Be sure to check out the seven international pavilions that are paving the road to success for future international exhibitors through activations, new characters, seminars and more.

## China Pavilion/ACG-IP Trading Centre – Booth #N236

China has had a presence at Licensing Expo for several years

now, however this year, a different company—China ACG Group—will organize the country-specific pavilion.

China ACG Group has also promised several can't-miss events throughout the show including an opening ceremony and a seminar on Chinese animation and licensing. In addition, the company will showcase several of its brands including Ali Fox, which is celebrating its 10th anniversary, and the characters from the TV series “Boonie Bears.”

The pavilion will also host several Chinese companies including Fantawild Animation, Beijing Dream Castle Culture Co. and China Toy & Juvenile Product Association, among others.

“The China Pavilion is organized by China ACG Group and operated by ACG-IP Trading Centre. The pavilion focuses on enhancing the value of famous Chinese ACG original brands and characters in the international market. With an on-site team in place to assist, the China Pavilion staff will provide consultation at Licensing Expo for exhibitors and attendees who are interested in learning more about the growing licensing opportunities in China,” says Tuo Zuhai, chairman, China ACG Group.

## Taiwan Pavilion – Booth #B86

Organized by the New Taipei City Computer Association, the Taiwan Pavilion is a brand-new exhibitor at this year's show.

The new Taiwan Pavilion will be showcasing five-toe socks from Danken Enterprise, technology-based headwear from Sound Team and waterproof LED products from Fourideal.

In addition to the products being showcased, the pavilion will also host companies Hoping Jones, Let's Create and Multiple Link Co.





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#### Brazilian Brands – Booth #S234

The Brazilian Brands Pavilion made its debut at Licensing Expo last year and will continue to be operated by Brazil's licensing association, ABRAL—Associação Brasileira de Licenciamento.

Like last year, the Brazilian Brands Pavilion will showcase products from companies including FICO, Kasmanas, Red Nose, Redibra, Rinaldi and Sports Club Corinthians Paulista, several of which boast licensed products from Coca-Cola, Nintendo and other top companies and brands.

#### Mexican Pavilion – Booth #D214

Licensing Expo will once again host the Mexican Pavilion, which will continue to be operated by Promexico.

At this year's show, the Mexican Pavilion will highlight three new associates—I.N.C. Marias, The Brand Licensing Entertainment and Alegretto—all of which will showcase brand-new properties and characters.

#### El Salvador Pavilion – Booth #B104

Organized by Proesa, the El Salvador Pavilion will host The Stonebot Studio, Panacea and International Freelance Services.

In addition to hosting the El Salvadorian companies, the pavilion will also showcase the companies' brands including Agent Dog, Captain Mostachini, DoodleBoo, Battle of the Spells and Droddy & Roddy, among others.

#### Korea Pavilion – Booths #J192, #J206

The Korea Pavilion, organized by Korea Creative Content Agency, will host approximately 14 companies

at the show this year including content companies like Roi Visual, Aurora World, Redrover, Synergy Media, Daewon Media and Synergy Media, among others. According to KOCCA, the companies will debut new characters and animation series at this year's show.

Additionally, the Korean Pavilion will be introducing a new booth design at Licensing Expo 2016, which is a significant change from last year's design.

#### MDEC – Booth #A86

MDEC, a government agency responsible for overseeing the development and growth of the creative multimedia industry in Malaysia, is hosting the Malaysia Pavilion.

Making its Licensing Expo debut, MDEC will showcase brands including ABC Monsters, Chuck Chicken, Ejen Ali, Happy Together, Harry and Bunnie, Kobushi, Kuu Kuu Harajuku and Mia from Malaysia-based companies including Animasia Studio, Inspidea, LaLune Light Studio, Media Prima and Viz International. ©





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# LICENSING UNIVERSITY 2016

## **JUNE 20** **Basics of Licensing**

**9-11:15 a.m.**

Moderator: Stuart Selzter, president, Seltzer Licensing. Speakers: Julie McCleave, global licensing director, Unilever; Liz Kalodner, executive vice president and general manager, CBS Consumer Products; and Will Thompson, vice president, licensing, Changes.

## **Basics of International Licensing**

**11:30 a.m.-1:15 p.m.**

Moderator: Teri Niadna, managing director, Brandgenuity Europe. Speakers: Tracey Bleczynski, senior vice president, global licensing, UFC; Michael Hermann, director, licensing, The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; Rachel Wakley, head, licensing, Tesco; and Mark Kingston, general manager and senior vice president, Nickelodeon and Viacom Consumer Products EMEA, and international promotions and FMCG, Viacom International Media Networks.

## **Basics of Licensing Law**

**2-3:45 p.m.**

Moderator: Jed Ferdinand, senior managing partner, Ferdinand IP/24IP Law Group. Speakers: Greg Battersby, managing member, The Battersby Group; Allison Hobbs, director, legal and business affairs, Big Tent Entertainment; and Alan Kravetz, president and chief operating officer, LMCA.

## **JUNE 21**

### **Keynote: Toys to Content: Where Do We Go from Here?**

**8 a.m.**

Moderator: Marty Brochstein, senior vice president, LIMA. Speakers: Simon Waters, general manager and senior vice president, entertainment and consumer products, Hasbro;

Laura Zebersky, chief commercial officer, Jazwares; and Susie Lecker, chief brands officer, Toy Box division, Mattel.

## **What You Need to Know About Licensing in India and China**

**9:30-10:45 a.m.**

Moderator: Rutika Malaviya, principal, Rooh Entertainment. Speakers: Rohit Sobti, principal, Brand Monk Licensing; Grace Gu, customer manager, international, Shanghai Huayou Capital; Darshan Trivedi, chief executive officer, Varmora Infotech; and Figo Yu, chief executive officer, Dream Castle.

## **The Basics of Art Licensing**

**9:30-10:45 a.m.**

Moderator: John Mavrakis and Melissa Schulz, co-founders, Idealogie. Speakers: Ana Davis, artist; and Susan January, vice president, product management, Leanin' Tree.

## **Working with Agents and Consultants**

**11:15 a.m.-12:30 p.m.**

Moderator: Ira Mayer, consultant and former publisher, *The Licensing Letter*. Speakers: Gary Caplan, president, Gary Caplan; Ilana Wilensky, vice president and partner, Jewel Branding & Licensing; and Carole Postal, co-president, Knockout Licensing, and president, CopCorp Licensing.

## **The Rising Power of Gaming Communities and Their Potential in Consumer Products**

**11:15 a.m.-12:30 p.m.**

Moderator: Daniel Amos, head, new media, TinderBox, a division of Beanstalk. Speakers: Sean Galley, co-founder and chief executive officer, J!nx; and Andy Dudynsky, community manager, "Halo" franchise, 343 Industries—Microsoft Studios.

## **Licensed Products and Digital Marketing: Making It Work**

**1-2:15 p.m.**

Moderator: Stephen Reily, managing director and chairman, IMC. Speakers: Elise Contarsy, vice president, brand licensing, Meredith Corp; and Debbie Bookstaber, president, Element Associates.

## **Targeting Specialty Retail: Hidden Opportunities**

**1-2:15 p.m.**

Moderator: Melissa Fraley Agguini, executive director, products retail and licensing, Colonial Williamsburg. Speakers: John Jankowich, senior buyer, licensed merchandise, Cracker Barrel Old Country Store; Polina Rey, vice president, licensing, The Joester Loria Group; and Eric Flanigan, vice president, parks division, Aramark.

## **Crowdfunding: A How-To for Licensors and Licensees**

**2:45-4 p.m.**

Moderator: Karen Raugust, president, Raugust Communications. Speakers: Erik Dahlman, founder, Albino Dragon; and Dan Goodsell, writer/artist.

## **How Licensees Can Vet Licensors, and Vice Versa**

**2:45-4 p.m.**

Moderator: Marty Brochstein, senior vice president, industry relations and information, LIMA. Speakers: Andy Friess, president and senior vice president, global marketing, Toy State; Derrick Baca, executive vice president, licensing and business development, Hybrid Apparel; Karen Tiongsen, director, social responsibility programs, Universal Brand Development; and Kenny Beaupre, brand advocacy and licensing manager, Caterpillar.



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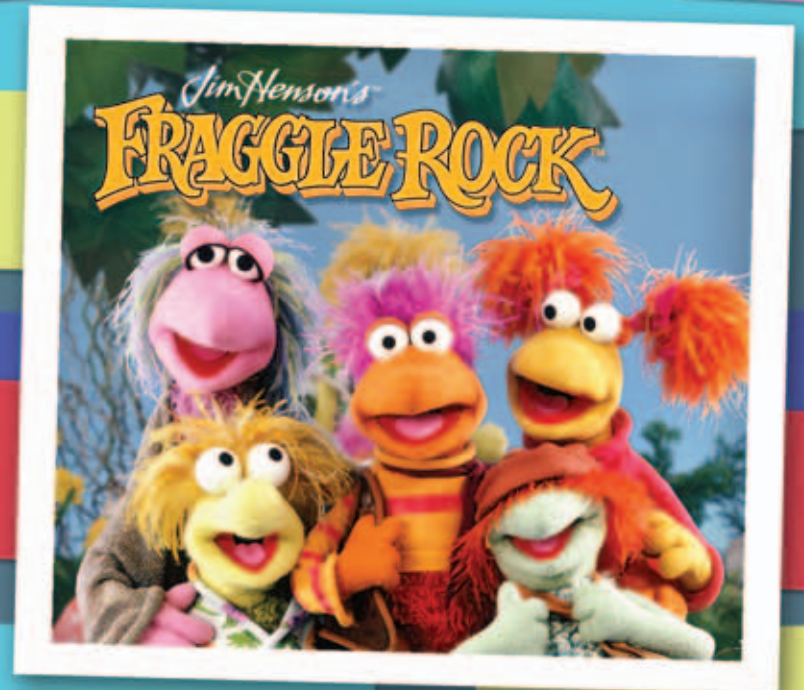
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## **JUNE 22**

### **Roundtable-Session 1**

**8-9:45 a.m.**

Leaders: Scott Sellwood, Source3; Stephanie Pottick, Pottick Law; Danny Simon, The Licensing Group; Jim Benton, Benton Arts; Sara Nemerov, Envy Branding; Stan Madaloni, Studio 2pt0; Christian Fortmann, 24IP Law Group; and Janna Markle, consultant.

### **Roundtable-Session 2**

**10:15 a.m.-12 p.m.**

Leaders: Andrew Koski, Miller Kaplan Arase; Joanne Loria, The Joester Loria Group; Careen Yapp, consultant; Jim Sachs, Harris Sachs; Laurie Marshall, Marshall Law Group; Ted Curtin, LMCA; Mike Slusar, Brandar Licensing; Randy Malone, MarketWise Consumer Insights; Allison Grand, Grand Communications; and Roz Nowicki, Peanuts Worldwide.

### **The Ten Most Important Do's and Don'ts of Licensing**

**12:30-1:45 p.m.**

Speakers: JJ Ahearn, managing partner, Licensing Street; and Woody Browne, managing partner, Building Q.

### **Basics of Fashion Licensing**

**12:30-1:45 p.m.**

Speaker: Carolyn D'Angelo, executive vice president, brand management and marketing services, Iconix Brand Group.

### **The Art and Science of Competitive Shopping**

**2:15-3:30 p.m.**

Moderator: Leigh Ann Schwarzkopf, principal, Project Partners Network. Speakers: Michelle Lamb, co-founder, Marketing Directions; Annalisa Ciganko, senior director, global retail, Iconix Brand Group; and Elisha Gordon, vice president, licensing, Jay Franco and Sons.

### **The Art and Business of Licensed App Development**

**2:15-3:30 p.m.**

Moderator: Germaine Gioia, founder, PlayLife Media. Speakers: Tim Walsh, partner, Interactive Studio Management; Andy Koehler, vice president, business development and

## **DIGITAL MEDIA LICENSING SUMMIT 2016**

**JUNE 20**

### **The Online Video Revolution: Examining the Future of Media and Entertainment**

**11:45 a.m.-12:30 p.m.**

Speaker: James Creech, co-founder and chief executive officer, Paladin Software.

### **Multi-Channel Networks: What is Their Role? How Can Licensees and Retailers Work with Them and Their Talent?**

**12:30-1:15 p.m.**

Moderator: Greg Goodfried, digital media agent, United Talent Agency. Speakers: Anoulay Tsai, director, licensing, SEGA America; Rachel Szabo, head, consumer products, licensing and e-commerce,

Fullscreen; and Sam Weller, director, audience development, Bent Pixels.

### **Evaluating a Digital Influencer as a Brand**

**1:45-2:30 p.m.**

Speaker: Benjamin Grubbs, global head of top creators; YouTube.

### **Licensing Programs Driven by YouTube**

**2:30-3:15 p.m.**

Speakers: Sam Ferguson, director, licensing, Jazwares; Stone Newman, president, global products and consumer marketing, Genius Brands International; and Juliano Prado, co-creator, Gialinha Pintadinah, Bromelia Producoes.

licensing, GameMill Entertainment; Josh Austin, vice president, licensing, Paramount Pictures; and Justin Berenbaum, vice president, business development and strategic relations, 505 Games.

### **Protecting the Brand**

**4-5:15 p.m.**

Moderator: Pamela Deese, partner, Arent Fox.

### **Strategic Stewardship: Building a Long-Term Licensing Program**

**4-5:15 p.m.**

Moderator: Tamra Knepper, president, Knockout Licensing. Speakers: Dominic Burns, senior vice president, brand management and commercial, NBCUniversal International Studios; Marissa Durazzo, director, partnerships and promotions, Cost Plus World Market; Veronica Hart, senior vice president, licensing, CBS Consumer Products; and Alison Wallace, vice president, licensing, Hot Topic, Torrid, Box Lunch.

## **JUNE 23**

### **Everything You Need to Know About Royalty Rates**

**9-10:15 a.m.**

Moderator: Debra Joester, president and chief executive officer, Joester Loria Group. Speakers: Derrick Baca, executive vice

president, licensing and business development, Hybrid Apparel; Paul Brachle, president, Licensing Financial Services; Ramez Toubassy, president, brands division, Gordon Brothers Group; and Cindy Levitt, senior vice president, merchandise and marketing, Hot Topic.

### **Global Toy Licensing 2016 and the Star Wars Effect**

**9-10:15 a.m.**

Moderator: Matthew Hudak, research analyst, Euromonitor International.

### **Planning and Executing Your Social Media Strategy**

**10:45 a.m.-12 p.m.**

Speaker: Natalie Cupps DiBlasi, co-founder and executive director, digital marketing, media and strategy, Laced Agency.

### **Licensing to Re-Establish a Legacy Brand**

**10:45 a.m.-12 p.m.**

Moderator: Alan Kravets, president and chief operating officer, LMCA. Speakers: Federico de Bellegarde, principal, SE&A Consulting; Michael Lee, co-founder and managing partner, JMM Lee Properties; and Mark Matheny, chief executive officer, Retail & Marketing Solutions. ©



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# Readies to Soar

Under new leadership, Brand Licensing Europe, set for Oct. 11-13, has already sold out more than 80 percent of the floor space, promising a show that will be bigger than ever before. **by ERICA GARBER**

**N**ow under new leadership and the corporate umbrella of UBM, the second largest event producer in the world, Brand Licensing Europe is already gearing up for its biggest year yet with more resources, innovation, exhibitors and attendees—and even more growth potential.

In the last decade, BLE has experienced significant growth. In 2006, the show topped out at 2,383-square-meters, showcasing 144 exhibitors to its 2,800 attendees. This year's show, which will take place Oct. 11-13 at London's Olympia, has already secured

200 companies—or 80 percent of its 8,000-square-meters floor space—and is on track to host 7,000 attendees.

The show's current growth increase is on track with the show's trajectory and will be further reinforced by the alignment of BLE and Licensing Expo under the UBM global banner, which is supported by the appointments of Anna Knight, brand director, customer technology and licensing, UBM EMEA, and Laura Freedman-Dagg, brand manager, Brand Licensing Europe, UBM EMEA.

In her new position, Knight will manage the brands under her



**ANNA KNIGHT**  
brand director, customer technology and licensing, UBM EMEA



**LAURA FREEDMAN-DAGG**  
brand manager, Brand Licensing Europe, UBM EMEA



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remit, which includes BLE and three customer- and marketing-centric events—Technology for Marketing, eCommerce Expo and Customer Contact Expo, each taking place in September at London's Olympia.

Her priorities will be to develop the long-term outlook of the show and ensure that it's sustainable, truly pan-European, growing in the right direction and that it benefits from being part of a wider portfolio of events that include marketers and retailers, both of which are target sectors for many of BLE's exhibitors.

"My role is a new focus for UBM and one that will look deeply at customers' needs and wants," says Knight. "We have a team in place whose sole focus is the customer experience. We are also looking for places to innovate, to where the market is heading and to international opportunities. And all this can be achieved with a global approach to other UBM brands, such as licensing."

Meanwhile, Freedman-Dagg will be 100 percent dedicated to BLE and will be responsible for the delivery and execution of the show and will work closely with the teams that pull the show together, including a team of marketing specialists tasked with developing the audience, sales specialists tasked with providing the best packages and ROI for customers and an operations team that will build an engaging attendee experience.

"It's really important that this event reflects the innovation that its exhibitors deliver day-to-day through their brand activations and licensing programs, and it'll do that by providing an engaging experience for the community to enjoy and be inspired by," says Freedman-Dagg. "We're both also really excited to collaborate with the Licensing Expo and the *License! Global* teams to ensure that our combined global audience is catered to all year round with fantastic and relevant content in London, Vegas, in print and online."

The ultimate result of Knight and Freedman-Dagg's new positions will give exhibitors and attendees of BLE more access to retailers and end-user customers.

Knight and Freedman-Dagg won't stop there. This year, they plan to elevate this year's show through the customer experience.

"We want attendees to arrive and understand where to go and who to talk to in order to make the most of their time, and we want exhibitors to have the most productive three days possible," say Knight and Freedman-Dagg. "We appreciate that even in such a sociable and community-driven industry, investing in an event, both in terms of time and money, is a big deal, so it has to be as productive as it is enjoyable."

In order to ensure that this year's show is both productive and enjoyable for attendees, BLE will continue to host three zones and will ensure that each is

easily distinguishable and nuanced so that they deliver value for each exhibitor and clarity for attendees.

First, the Character & Entertainment Zone, which is notorious for its buzz, will remain the largest area of the show and will host exhibitors such as Nickelodeon Viacom Consumer Products, "Masha and the Bear," Activision and Pokémon, among many others.

The Brands & Lifestyle Zone will continue to reflect the creative parts of the licensing industry. This year, the zone has seen considerable growth with sports and heritage companies leading the way. The zone has already secured exhibitors including the Chelsea Football Club, FIFA, Adidas-AC Milan, Adidas-Real Madrid, the Natural History Museum, the V&A Museum, the Science Museum, the British Library and the National Portrait Gallery, among others.

Meanwhile, the Art & Design Zone will remain the place to discover brand-new IP.

"All of the customer research we've done since UBM acquired BLE has shown that one of the primary reasons people attend the show is to discover something they didn't already know about," says Knight and Freedman-Dagg. "We're really excited to bring this part of the show to life with the help of its exhibitors and our partners."

This year, BLE will introduce a new matchmaking service, just like the one that is launching at Licensing Expo this year, so attendees can "cut through the noise" and participate in pre-qualified meetings.

BLE also plans to continue the Retail Mentoring Programme, which gives buyers a wider understanding of the licensing industry. Now in its seventh year, more than 50 delegates from retailers including Marks & Spencer's, Blackpool Pleasure Beach, Sainsbury's, Claire's Accessories, Matalan, The Entertainer and Halfords have already joined the 2016 program.

The show will also launch a Retail Mentoring Programme alumni group that will bring graduates back to the show each year with content developed specifically for them.

Across the board, Knight and Freedman-Dagg will focus on the show's European growth by bringing more delegations to the show and expanding the categories that are represented, so long as it is in line with market developments and continues to stay focused on value for the community that attends the show. Despite looking to a successful future within the industry, the two executives will continue to stay hyper-focused on providing a next-level show for 2016.

"Our main goal for this year is to build on what is already a really fantastic show, at the heart of the European licensing community," says Knight and Freedman-Dagg. "BLE is a great show which has been thriving and serving its community beautifully for many years, so we take that reputation very seriously." ©



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**JOSH SILVERMAN**

executive vice president, global licensing, Disney Consumer Products and Interactive Media

# SUPERCHARGED AND BATTLE SAVVY

As he approaches his fifth anniversary this November spearheading Disney Consumer Products and Interactive Media, Josh Silverman is becoming a superhero of sorts and shaping his legacy as a leader in global licensing. In this exclusive Q&A with *License! Global*, the longtime executive explains his strategy and what's next for the world's largest licensor.

**In *License! Global's* 2016 Top 150 Global Licensors report, The Walt Disney Company reported \$52.5 billion in retail sales, up \$7 billion from 2014. Explain the reasons for the significant increase in retail sales?**

The biggest overall driver is The Walt Disney Company's incredible stories, brands and characters, which continue to resonate with fans around the world. Our studios had an amazing year with the record-breaking release of *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, the global impact of new franchises like *Zootopia* and Disney Pixar's *Inside Out* and the ongoing success of movies from the Marvel universe like *Avengers: Age of Ultron* and *Ant-Man*. Additionally, TV properties like "The Descendants," "Lion Guard," "Doc McStuffins" and "Miles From Tomorrowland" connect with kids and families around the world, while our evergreen franchises including Mickey, Minnie, Tinker Bell, Disney Princess and *Frozen* continue to be incredibly strong.

**Summarize Disney Consumer Products and Interactive Media's global licensing strategy and how it has evolved over the past two years?**

First, we have an incredibly strong portfolio of brands including Disney, Marvel, Pixar and *Star Wars* that appeal to a broad audience. A few years ago, we transformed the structure of our business to focus on The Walt Disney Company's brands and franchises rather than a category orientation, and this is central to our strategy. This approach has the dual benefit of maintaining a laser focus on all of our brands and franchises, not just the ones with a big movie or TV release. It also allows us to fully develop programs for new content as well as sustain our beloved evergreen franchises.



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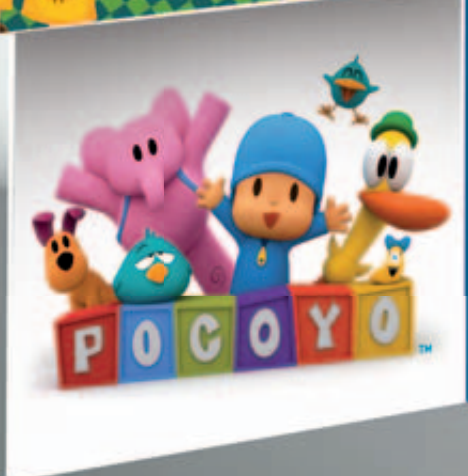
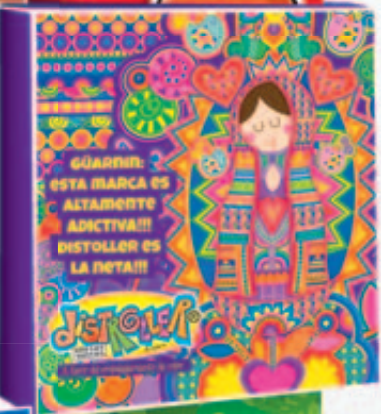
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Third, everything we do starts with the consumer. As the consumer landscape continues to evolve, so does our strategy to ensure we are offering the right mix of products and experiences. Our stories are universal and for everyone, and we continue to focus on expanding demographics to grow our business with new segments from young adults to grandparents.

**What are among some of the recent new partnerships that exemplify the overall DCPI strategy?**

Sphero, who we partnered with to create the BB-8 toy for *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, is a great example of a company using technology in a really interesting way to create a unique and innovative product.

Coach is a company that we're collaborating with on Mickey Mouse to create a luxury collection that appeals to young adults and adults. The product line and marketing is incredible and a fantastic example of the interplay between pop culture and fashion that appeals to Millennials.

Uniqlo is an example of a collaboration that spans both product and retail in a compelling way. In January, Uniqlo opened an entire floor in their Shanghai flagship store dedicated to Disney, Marvel, Pixar and *Star Wars* properties. Not only are they designing fantastic products celebrating our characters, but they are also focused on creating experiences that appeal to a young, fashionable audience across Asia.

**Following the unveiling of *Star Wars* products last September and the dominance across categories at retail in Q4 2015, what is the current strategy gearing up for the next film in 2017?**

2015 was an incredible year for *Star Wars* as fans around the world celebrated the launch of *The Force Awakens*. The success of the movie has given us tremendous momentum with fans of all ages, and we're excited about the potential of *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story* this year. Our global Force Friday launch and toy unboxing event leading up to midnight retail openings around the world epitomized our approach to the franchise. It's about creating opportunities to connect with fans around the world to share in the excitement and anticipation around new stories, products and experiences.

We're also putting a focus on expanding our influence with female fans through creating tailored product lines that appeal directly to them. We're seeing great success in this area, and with strong and heroic characters like Rey being front and center in the movies, we expect female fans to build an even deeper connection with the brand.

**With *Captain America: Civil War* such a box office success and the introduction of new characters from the Marvel universe, what's the focus now for the franchise?**

Marvel continues to go from strength to strength, and we're excited about the fantastic content lineup in 2017. We are focused on continuing to grow Marvel into a global franchise and a true lifestyle brand for fans of all ages. We are really excited about Black Panther as a major breakout character from *Captain America: Civil War* and have big plans for him in the future. We are also focused on building our next generation of female super heroes including Black Widow, She Hulk, Spider Gwen, Scarlet Witch and Squirrel Girl. We had the strongest line ever behind established favorite Black Widow this year, and we are developing programs for the other emerging favorites and seeing great results. We have developed some amazing products for female fans across multiple categories including a great athleisure line that we partnered with Her Universe on with for Kohl's.





For *Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2*, out May 5, 2017, there will be a year-round, freshly expanded merchandising program for fans of all ages. We are also expanding the lineup around breakout character Groot, which will include new toys, games, books, apparel, accessories and more.

Spider-Man will get a huge push with the live-action July 7, 2017, theatrical release of *Spider-Man: Homecoming* and additional new opportunities for licensing, all reinforcing the character's evergreen strength. There will be a focus on innovation with our partner collaborations. For example, Hasbro will be integrating new components and technology that expands play value and keeps Spider-Man toys fresh and relevant. LEGO is looking to incorporate new thematic and emerging play patterns that will bring added excitement to new construction sets. Marvel will also expand Spider-Man's presence on healthy snacks and other on-trend products that resonate with both kids and parents.

**Other than the "major" franchises, what other properties/characters have emerged as strong brands at retail?**

As I mentioned earlier, the studio has had an amazing year and event films like *Zootopia* and Disney Pixar's *Inside Out* have been met with success at retail. New TV properties including "The Descendants" and "Lion Guard" also have made a strong impact.

Outside of film and television content, Disney Tsum Tsum has emerged as a strong brand and is a great example of how DCPI connects with fans through innovative and engaging product experiences. Tsum Tsum was born as a game and plush line out of Disney Store in Japan, and has turned into a global success story in both the digital and physical spaces with games and now a broad product line spanning toys, apparel, collectibles and home décor.

**As you gear up for Licensing Expo 2016, what's the core message you will deliver to your partners at the DCPI summit?**

Whether it's new characters and stories or inspired re-tellings of classic tales, The Walt Disney Company continues to create unparalleled content that provides unique licensing opportunities. The theme for our showcase is "Everybody Loves..." connecting to the idea that our characters and stories are for everyone and that everyone has their own special connection to them. This emotional connection is incredibly powerful and helps drive the success of the company across movies, television, parks and, of course, licensing.

**What are new initiatives that will be unveiled during Licensing Expo?**

The Walt Disney Company's licensing business will continue to be driven by hit films and television programs in 2017, as well as the company's incredible classic stories and characters. Some of the key properties we will focus on at Licensing Expo include Disney Pixar's *Cars 3*, *Frozen Northern Lights*, *Beauty and the Beast* (from The Walt Disney Studios), Marvel's *Guardians of the Galaxy* and *Spider-Man*, *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story* and *Episode 8*, Disney's *Pirates of the Caribbean 5*, *Descendants 2*, Disney Junior's "Vamperina," Mickey Mouse and Minnie Mouse.

**As you approach your fifth anniversary in your current position with DCPI, what "wows" you the most about the group's accomplishments? And what would you like to see unfold over the next five years?**

What really wows me are the amazing and talented people I get to partner with at DCPI every day. I'm lucky to have such amazing colleagues, and our licensing team around the world is spectacularly creative, passionate and dedicated.

I'm also wowed by our licensing partners and their continued imagination, creativity and commitment. Our mission is to extend the emotional connection that people have with our stories and characters by creating incredible products and experiences. ©



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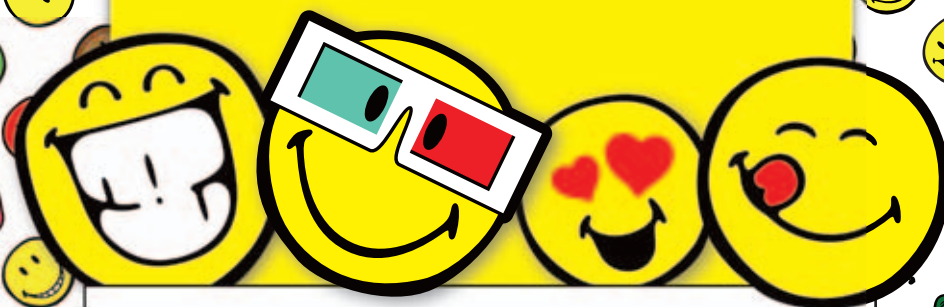
In 1997, the world was in the midst of a technological revolution. People were using expressive emotions made from punctuation marks for text messaging and emails. Hundreds of these had been created as an art form but only :) and :( were really understandable and being used. It was then that Nicolas Loufrani (CEO of the Smiley Company) started experimenting with Smileys to create graphic faces that corresponded to the pre-existing emoticons.

Loufrani sat down with his designers in New York and created a dictionary of emotions that consisted

of thousands of different Smileys which he registered with the United States Copyright Office from 1997 and published on the internet in 1998, these would become the world's first graphical emoticons. This allowed The Smiley Company to create a new brand (SmileyWorld) that expressed thousands of emotions and could also be applied to a variety of products.

In the 20 years since then, these Smileys have been featured on 10s of thousands of products created by more than 800 licensees, generating over \$1 billion dollars in retail sales.





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- Creating structured collections with best-selling products and on-trend designs allows the company to advise licensees and retailers on the best products for their markets

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- A specialist brand teams coming from licensee-specific industries who understand the needs of each and every licensee
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The Smiley Company is the original creator of internet graphic emoticons since 1997 and has licensed these globally to over 800 companies since then.

These emoticons are a protected trademark with copyrights and trademarks valid throughout the world. Not only does the Smiley company protect its original logo, but also its icons and characters. The Smiley Company has the rights to over 3,000 emoticons. In 2015 the business undertook 138 legal actions which resulted in the destruction of hundreds of thousands of products. The Smiley Company will seize infringement products at borders, in warehouses and from stores, in order to protect its properties through our global enforcement network.

If you believe that you are about to purchase products that might be infringing on The Smiley Company IP, do not hesitate to contact [legal@smiley.com](mailto:legal@smiley.com)

For licensing enquiries contact: [margherita@smiley.com](mailto:margherita@smiley.com)

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**IGINIO STRAFFI,**  
*founder and president, Rainbow*

# COOL, CALM AND CREATIVE

**S**ince he founded Rainbow, the Loreto, Italy-based animation studio, almost 21 years ago, Iginio Straffi has stayed true to his original philosophy based on people, passion, creativity and new content.

“Rainbow has thrived thanks to the passion, artistic ability and entrepreneurial skills of the people who have worked with us,” Straffi says. “The company has been transformed into a holding company that boasts 10 companies dealing with a wide range of productions from TV to movies, toys, multimedia products and publishing.

Today, Rainbow represents one of the largest and most complete animation studios in the world with a portfolio that includes “Winx Club,” “Tommy & Oscar,” “Prezzy,” “Monster Allergy,” “Huntik Secret,” “Seekers,” “PopPixie,” “Maya Fox,” “Gladiators of Rome” and “Mia and me.”

And the company, which also has operations in Moscow, Hong Kong and Singapore, is now developing new properties to drive additional growth and further establish and solidify the studio’s position in the marketplace for the future.

“New content is the cornerstone of all that we do at Rainbow,” emphasizes Straffi. “The research and development of new content has never been put aside throughout the years, and our creative energy is our most important resource.”

One of the most important new projects is “Regal Academy,” which is based on the fairy tale adventures of Rose Cinderella, an earthling who discovers she is Cinderella’s granddaughter and will attend the Regal Academy, a school for fairy tale characters. The show targets 5- to 10-year-olds and is Rainbow’s longest show in development.

“It’s a very ambitious project for us. We have worked over seven years on production and development to make sure that it will be a very high-quality show with



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great characters and a story to win the hearts of kids all over the world,” says Straffi. “We trust that kids will love the beautiful design and exciting storyline and hope for ‘Regal Academy’ to be a major worldwide success.”

“Regal Academy” premiered in late May in Italy and is enjoying very strong ratings, says Straffi. It will premiere on Nickelodeon in the U.S. in August.

The licensing potential, according to Straffi, is very strong and it’s no surprise that Rainbow has big plans considering the aggressive international expansion of “Winx Club,” which has become a multi-billion dollar franchise in retail sales of licensed merchandise.

“We will take advantage of the storytelling aspect of the show and the appealing play patterns that stem from it based on a huge number of role play concepts,” explains Straffi. “So far, we have been getting very positive response from the retailers about the merchandise mix.”

Toys including fashion dolls and role play toys will be the driving category, followed by fashion and accessories, back-to-school, stationery and gifts.

“It also has a strong publishing-oriented program, as the stories within the show are fresh, appealing and original,” he adds.

In addition to “Regal Academy,” Straffi says Rainbow is developing its first live action dramedy, “Maggie and Bianca: Fashion Friends.” Aimed at a tween and kids audience, the show is set in the Fashion Academy of Milan and combines music and fashion for tales of friendships found and secrets revealed. It is scheduled to release in the first half of 2017.

“We are also building on our evergreen franchise ‘Winx Club’ through the brand-new ‘World of Winx’ show, due to be released at the end of 2016 on Netflix with 26 half-hour episodes. The show is a spy story based on a strong serialization,” says Straffi. “Our ambition is that Rainbow

properties will be always able to fill the imagination of our audience. Our content is rich, our stories are engaging, the audience loves them—every child would like to have ‘fantasy friends’ in everyday life. Live events, together with a theme park, offer



children a new entertainment dimension and experience to share with friends and family.”

Straffi believes that Rainbow’s “ongoing commitment to keeping our brands fresh and relevant” is what differentiates Rainbow’s approach.

“We constantly develop new content to maintain fans’ interest. A good example of that is our efforts behind ‘Winx,’ an IP entering its 13th year since it premiered. We are still investing in new seasons every year and theatrical movies once every few years,” Straffi explains. “We devote a huge amount of time and resources to production, as we know that we can’t just sit on our laurels and expect existing content to do the job for us. We regularly give fans something completely new, which not only has a boosting effect on a property from the consumers’ point of view but also provides licensees with fresh opportunities for merchandising.”

Straffi believes the main challenge in the future is to stay competitive with good broadcasting.

“However, that’s no longer enough to ensure the success of a franchise,” he says. “You need to be appealing for the audience across a multitude of channels including the web, social media, live events and theme parks to provide strong identification power. That’s what can really tie kids to a brand in a unique way.”

Beyond “Regal Academy” and its other new initiatives, Straffi envisions a strong future following Rainbow’s recent acquisition last October of the Canadian animation studio Bardel, which is based in Vancouver.

“We are even more global and clearly a leader in our industry. With a production capacity of close to 1,200 artists, Rainbow will be offering more great IP and shows in coming years across all formats from TV to movies to musicals. We’ll continue to monitor the market to identify ideas that push the boundaries of kids’ entertainment and delight audiences.” ©

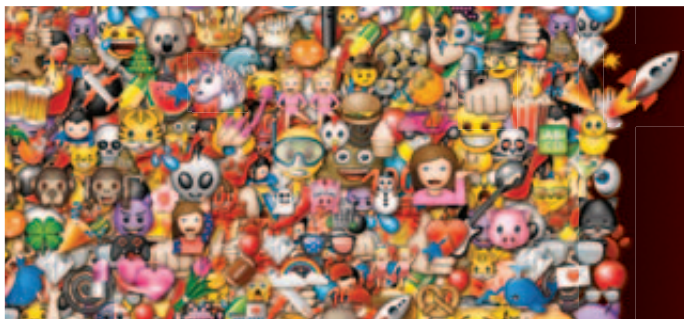




LAS VEGAS

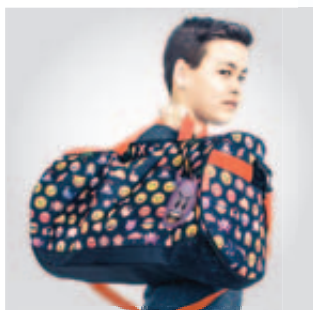
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**RICK GLANKLER**

*president and general manager, FremantleMedia Kids & Family Entertainment*

# FEWER, BIGGER, BETTER

**R**ick Glankler, president and general manager, FremantleMedia Kids & Family Entertainment, had a mantra when he joined the company in October 2013: fewer, bigger, better.

“When I joined the company, Fremantle had been producing about 16 properties around the world with the support of a small team,” he says. “I felt we would be better served by focusing on fewer, bigger, better brands that had global potential.”

Glankler’s previous experience at Mattel, where he helped lead the integration and global brand management of HIT Entertainment’s properties within the Fisher-Price division as part of the HIT acquisition, was crucial to his approach. As former senior vice president of HIT Entertainment, Glankler’s brand, licensing and production leadership helped to build some of the most successful preschool global franchises ever, including “Thomas & Friends,” “Bob the Builder,” “Fireman Sam,” “Angelina Ballerina” and “Mike the Knight.”

“No one has a crystal ball to predict which brands will be successful, but the experience I had with those brands helped to mitigate the risks taken as an independent producer,” says Glankler.

Glankler, who is based in New York City and reports to Sangeeta Desai, chief operating officer, FremantleMedia Kids & Family Entertainment, oversees all creative and commercial aspects of the business with the overall responsibility of continuing to grow Fremantle’s portfolio of brands into successful global franchises. He is responsible for all areas of Fremantle’s Kid’s & Family Entertainment business, from production to consumer products, TV sales and brand management.

Most recently, Glankler has overseen the re-launch of the classic children’s animation series “Danger Mouse.” The series debuted on CBBC in



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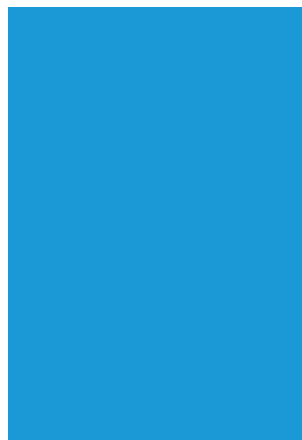


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the U.K. on Sept. 28, 2015—exactly 34 years to the day from when the original series launched.

“‘Danger Mouse’ is the first new property during my tenure,” he says. “We focused on creating best-in-class story delivery with best-in-class production, and ‘Danger Mouse’ has been the highest rated launch on CBBC since 2014. The series will now be seen on ABC in Australia, TV4 in New Zealand and Netflix in the Americas, Nordics, Benelux and Japan, with other territories launching in the near future.”

Licensed products are launching now with master toy licensee Jazwares debuting a toy line in the U.K. followed by a fall/winter launch across a number of apparel categories. Licensees on board for the program include TVM Fashion Lab for a range of daywear and outerwear; Cooneen and Misirli for nightwear, underwear and swimwear; and Misirli for socks. Partnerships have also been signed for publishing with Penguin, for magazines with DC Thomson and for bedding with Dreamtex.

Last year, “Danger Mouse” partnered with Pizza Hut on a branded activity booklet promotion in the U.K., and the division is actively working with other big names to secure third-party promotions.

And “Danger Mouse” isn’t the only recent success for Fremantle in Europe and Northern America.

“We’re creating a global structure to fully exploit our key properties,” says Glankler. “Europe has always been a core market for us, but our launch of ‘Kate & Mim-Mim’ on Disney Junior in the U.S. has been very successful, and the series has huge international appeal and has been sold to over 100 territories around the world.”

One secret to “Kate & Mim-Mim’s” success is the number of seasonal specials the division creates around

the series to answer the needs of broadcasters.

“Our content actively supports our broadcasters’ needs,” says Glankler. “We launched in the U.S. with a Christmas special in 2014 and have created Easter and Halloween specials. This year, an ‘Adventures in Oz’ extended episode will launch on Disney Junior at Thanksgiving.”

Consumer product launches for the “Kate & Mim-Mim” brand are rolling out in the U.S. with a new DVD from SkipRope, a toy line from Just Play and a range of books from Random House planned for launch soon. Apparel partnership announcements will be made shortly and Just Play has appointed The Giochi Preziosi Group as the toy distributor in EMEA, with initial launches in Spain and Italy.

The third key brand for the company, “Tree Fu Tom,” also has market traction and airs in 123 territories around the globe. Master toy licensee Jazwares and Roadshow’s DVDs have launched in Australia and in the U.K., and a 60-date tour at Haven holiday parks will keep the series in the spotlight.

Glankler says another new property will be announced soon.

“We’ve been successful at finding a white space in a competitive preschool market, and the new show has timely, socially relevant themes and an imbedded educational component that works seamlessly with the storytelling. I haven’t been this excited about a show in more than 20 years,” he says.

The new property, as yet undisclosed, will include animation, live action and other digital exploration elements.

“In addition to great content, we have to reach kids in ways that they want to consume content, which includes YouTube, Netflix and other platforms. We recognize that the landscape of how viewers consume content is changing and we’re focused on the full ethos of how kids are engaging in brands. We need to give kids content whenever they want it and how they want it, so we are optimizing content for every platform

so kids can see it on TV and then go online to engage in an active conversation,” says Glankler.

Fremantle will also soon announce a theatrical initiative, giving kids yet another way to interact with its brands. ©







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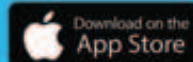
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# Hasbro The Next Chapter in Storytelling

An in-depth look at how this toy-driven company continues to evolve into an entertainment, content and licensing powerhouse worldwide. **by TONY LISANTI**

**T**he transformation of Hasbro from a traditional toy company based in a small Northeastern town into a bona fide global entertainment and licensing powerhouse is now entering a new decade of opportunity and more aggressive growth.

The strategy that originally created uncertainty and criticism is now producing acclaim and results. The vision that began with slow and methodical changes is now starting to operate as a more lightning fast-paced, integrated business of innovation and creativity. The prime-time storytelling that began with the first *Transformers* film in

2007 has morphed into a multi-billion dollar franchise with a rich and abundant pipeline of content in development, as the company gears up for the next installment of film No. 5 in 2017. The company's expansion of consumer products into various lifestyle categories and onto fashion runways oftentimes makes Hasbro appear more like a trendy apparel company rather than the old style supplier of iconic toys and games. And the message that reverberates throughout the company is that opportunities for growth and expansion have never been better.

What began as chairman Brian Goldner's vision

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**JOHN FRASCOTTI**  
president, Hasbro Brands

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that Hasbro's brands offer, "so much more than meets the eye," based on an "immersive brand experience," (as he explained to *License! Global* in February 2009), has matured into a synergistic mission of "creating the world's best play experiences."

The fact is that while it has taken Hasbro 10 years to establish the internal structure and organization required to be a true global entertainment entity (as well as a significant capital investment), the company is now in an enviable position to execute its strategy in a more meaningful way.

While today's Hasbro is a very different type of company, it has maintained a very consistent approach and commitment to its culture, people and vision. It boasts 53 offices around the globe that do business in 39 countries, and along with various partnerships, this broad and diverse reach and clout has positioned the company at the center of entertainment, content development, digital and gaming, enabling the continued growth of its toys and games business and, of course, its lucrative licensed products business, which is expanding into several new sectors.

In 2009, Hasbro Studios was formed to better handle its content development. In 2013, Hasbro acquired a 70 percent stake in mobile game developer Backflip Studios. And in 2014, the company established Allspark Pictures to better manage its overall film business.

"It's been a great transformation," recalls John Frascotti, president, Hasbro Brands, who joined the company as chief marketing officer in 2008 and has been a key driver in the reinvention of the company. "The business we are in today

is really about building multi-dimensional franchises that are rooted in great stories and great characters. And, in an interesting way, it comes back to our purpose as a company—to make

the world a better place for children and their families.

"It's a very lofty statement," admits Frascotti. "But think about our business, which brings fun, laughter and joy to children and families based on our concept called, 'Share of Life.' Our brands connect with consumers in multiple ways and are growing every day."

Throughout Goldner's tenure, Hasbro has grown its revenue by more than \$1 billion, reaching \$4.45 billion in FY 2015. According to company reports, 52 percent of its revenue is attributed to seven core franchise brands that include Transformers, My Little Pony, Littlest Pet Shop, Monopoly, Nerf, Magic: The Gathering and Play-Doh.

In terms of retail sales of licensed products, Hasbro has also experienced significant growth over the past decade, increasing by almost \$2 billion.

For 2015, Hasbro reported \$5.9 billion in retail sales of licensed merchandise worldwide, according to *License! Global's* annual Top 150 Global Licensors report, published in May. The company ranked No. 6 among the world's largest licensors and is on track to become the second largest entertainment licensor behind No. 1, The Walt Disney Company.

While Hasbro's overall transformation story isn't a new one per se, it's important to understand and revisit as the company is now better positioned than ever before and poised for more aggressive growth on multiple platforms. Based on its slate of new initiatives, which includes the launch of a new franchise, Hasbro is all about potential, which is what partners, shareholders and consumers demand.

"It's exciting to see what Goldner started and how it has gone from strength to strength," says Stephen Davis, executive vice president and chief content officer, Hasbro Studios, who has run the studio since it was formed in 2009. "It has changed both in perception and practice Hasbro's profile, and now our properties are seen everywhere."

"It's about how wide we can cast the net to allow our consumers to experience our brands in very different



**STEPHEN DAVIS**  
executive vice president and  
chief content officer, Hasbro  
Studios



**SIMON WATERS**  
general manager and senior vice  
president, entertainment and  
consumer products, Hasbro

ways than in the past when it was typically experienced only as a toy,” says Simon Waters, general manager and senior vice president, entertainment and consumer products, Hasbro. “We are so close to our storytelling in everything we do so that everything works across all platforms and, from the very start, as a team.”

Hasbro’s impressive list of new content and licensing initiatives includes the following:

### Entertainment

- **Transformers film franchise**—Hasbro and Paramount Studios recently announced a slate of new Transformers films. *Transformers 5* will hit the big screen on June 23, 2017, followed by *Transformers 6*, which will focus on the Bumblebee character, on June 8, 2018, and *Transformers 7* on June 28, 2019.
- **Cross-property film universe**—In December, Paramount Pictures and Allspark Pictures, Hasbro’s film label, announced a partnership for five feature films based on Hasbro’s iconic properties—G.I. Joe, Micronauts, Visionaries, M.A.S.K. (Mobile Armored Strike Kommand) and ROM.
- **Transformers TV**—“Robots in Disguise” season two launched in February on Cartoon Network in the U.S., spotlighting popular characters such as Bumblebee, Sideswipe, Strongarm and Grimlock. Season four of “Transformers Rescue Bots” will air this spring, and season one is now being aired on Netflix. In addition, the franchise is teaming up with multi-channel network Machinima for a new series that will be distributed digitally this summer, “Transformers: Combiner Wars.”
- **My Little Pony**—The billion-dollar franchise’s first movie, which will be distributed by Lionsgate, will premiere in 2017. It will introduce several new characters and will include a comprehensive licensing program. In addition, season six of “My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic” will debut.
- **Ouija**—This fall the second installment of *Ouija* will hit the big screen for Hasbro Studios, in partnership with Universal, Blumhouse Productions and Platinum Dunes.
- **“Stretch Armstrong”**—For the first time, Hasbro Studios is creating original programming for Netflix



**MARK BLECHER**  
senior vice president, digital gaming and corporate development, Hasbro



**SAMANTHA LOMOW**  
senior vice president, global marketing, Hasbro



**MICHAEL KELLY**  
senior director, global publishing, Hasbro

with its 26-episode animated series based on the Stretch Armstrong property, which will debut in 2017.

- **New franchise**—Hanazuki, which is described by Hasbro “as an emotion-rich lifestyle brand that encourages tweens to express and embrace how they feel,” will launch this summer as a series of digital shorts produced by Hasbro Studios that will air on YouTube. A comprehensive licensing program is also being developed and will launch later this year.

At the heart of Hasbro’s storytelling strategy and brand blueprint is a major commitment to consumer research and insights, which is used to make critical business decisions across all business disciplines.

“Everything begins with our strategic brand blueprint,” says Frascotti. “It informs and directs our brand efforts through the insights we uncover, the innovation we develop and the investments we are making.”

According to Hasbro, over the past two years, the company has interacted with more than 100,000 parents, kids and caregivers across 14 countries.

“When fans become engaged and we connect with consumers, the fans want to connect more deeply because the brands mean something to them,” says Frascotti. “We are now a company that delivers branded experiences.”

“Our deal with Paramount, which takes five important Hasbro brands and creates a 10-year mythology around them, and the establishment of the Writer’s Room led by

Akiva Goldsman, who led *Transformers*, will significantly expand our opportunities across all platforms where we can engage consumers,” points out Davis.

“We have only mined a very small slice of that overall folklore, and the storytelling is so robust around it that there are many characters and stories we haven’t even introduced yet,” adds Frascotti.

“If you look at categories that we have been able to expand into because of storytelling, it really is unprecedented.

And because we are committed to content creation, it has allowed us to





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create new licensing programs,” explains Davis. “Every new story we tell each year allows us to create greater opportunities for our partners. It has also allowed us to get into new categories such as music, location-based entertainment, along with an exciting development in the comic books business.

“With My Little Pony, we have brought girls into the comics category in a way that no other brand or imprint has been able to do by selling over 3 million comics,” he adds. “Female empowerment is a very important central theme of what we do across many of our brands. Traditionally, some observers may have viewed the universe we are establishing as a boy-centric universe, when in fact there are a lot of strong female characters that we will develop and try to make our engagement gender inclusive and reflective of the writers we have hired. We are aware that our brands have to be a reflection of our consumer and our consumer reflects every type of individual.”

Davis also believes that digital, social and user-generated content all play a very critical role for Hasbro’s brands, citing Nerf as a key example.

“Although we are not generating a lot of traditional content for Nerf, our consumers are making an unprecedented amount of content,” says Davis. “Consumers are creating their own stories about how they engage with Nerf, which has been tremendous for the brand and given us the ability to develop new and innovative ways to expand the product line.”

Hasbro is also looking to expand Nerf into more categories such as location-based entertainment and more immersive experiences. The expansion of the Nerf brand into the pet category, for example, was a direct result of its consumer insights and feedback from consumer-generated content.



with such designers as Maria Escote’s collection at Madrid Fashion Week earlier this year, and in 2015 with Philip Plein, Au Jour Le Jour, Degen and Fyodor Golan. My Little Pony has also been extremely successful in the publishing of comics in a total of 10 countries in the EMEA region (the U.K., Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Poland, Turkey, Russia, Estonia and Norway) and a magazine in the U.K., which ranks in the top 5 of all girls’ magazines.

Hasbro recently collaborated with Sony for a My Little Pony holiday album and a live show, which started in Mexico, and has since expanded to Nicaragua, Panama, Peru and Colombia; and this spring, a match-3 mobile game, “My Little Pony: Puzzle Party,” produced by BackFlip Studios, was launched.

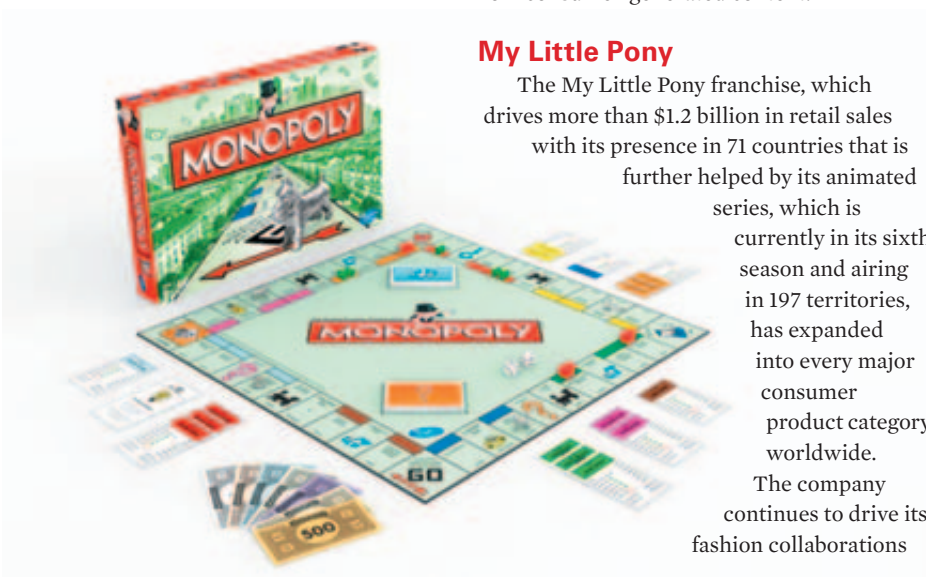
### My Little Pony

The My Little Pony franchise, which drives more than \$1.2 billion in retail sales with its presence in 71 countries that is further helped by its animated series, which is currently in its sixth season and airing in 197 territories, has expanded into every major consumer product category worldwide. The company continues to drive its fashion collaborations

### Transformers

The Transformers franchise, which represents a retail value of more than \$10 billion since 2004, has also expanded into multiple categories, and new licensing programs based on the upcoming slate of content are being developed to offer strong growth for the future. In fashion, Hasbro has partnered with Phillip Plein and Au Jour Le Jour for a kids’ collection, Shoyoroll (Hot House) for limited edition Jiu-jitsu Gi’s and a range of t-shirts and hats and Fyodor Golan and Halo Sports for footwear, apparel and accessories with retailer X’tep.

“We work with our partners who buy into the long-term value of the Transformers franchise, and they have the opportunity to build the brand along with us and our retail partners, rather than jumping around every year,” explains Waters. “The Paramount





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film deal is absolutely huge and a pinnacle moment. It enables us to build bigger and broader worlds.”

In music, Hasbro Studios partnered with Sony Music’s RED Associated Labels for “Transformers Roll Out,” a new alt-rock tribute compilation.

Hasbro also recently announced a partnership with S2BN Entertainment for a new live-action show, “Transformers Live,” which will tour worldwide over the next five years. The show will debut in 2017 in a custom-built, 4,500-person capacity venue in China. In addition, Hasbro partnered with Victory Hill Exhibitions for “The Transformers Experience” at Treasure Island’s new retail complex in Las Vegas, Nev., which will debut this summer.

The publishing and digital gaming categories continue to grow too with the ongoing comic series, *Transformers: More Than Meets the Eye*, and the recent new mobile game, “Transformers Rescue Bots: Hero Adventures,” which launched in February.

Says Mark Blecher, senior vice president, digital





gaming and corporate development, Hasbro: “While the gaming industry has changed dramatically over the past five years, it has created new opportunities for Hasbro to extend its franchises and game brands into mobile gaming.”

According to Blecher, the evolution of the gaming sector has provided the opportunity to extend storytelling and reach fans on a daily basis within digital and gambling initiatives. He believes that Hasbro is well positioned for the future to continue innovating with the development of virtual reality, as well.

Hasbro has also experienced continued growth on the publishing side of the business worldwide.

“We completed the conversion from a regional-led publishing group to a completely

global business in London, Paris, Shanghai and, most recently, Latin America,” says Michael Kelly, senior director, global publishing, Hasbro. “It gives us the ability to drill down to local needs and cultural differences and the ability to grow organically from a regional standpoint. For the first time in Hasbro’s history we have organic storytelling happening around the world and not just driven from one central location.”



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## The Future

The power of storytelling is critical to Hasbro's growth and future success. The company will continue to invest in its storytelling efforts that it believes "creates a connection that inspires the consumer to travel with a brand across the many points of engagement and ultimately unlocking the brand's full potential."

In February, Hasbro was ranked No. 3 on *Fast Company's* list of Most Innovative Companies in Hollywood, which acknowledges companies that are "disrupting business as usual and changing the world."

"We have evolved from selling toys on a shelf to building franchises and experiences with an underlying message," says Frascotti.

Another important factor in the overall growth and evolution of Hasbro has been its integration of content and product development. While it has always been a challenge for other major studios, Hasbro has mastered the execution of a collaborative environment, bringing together all decision makers from the early stages of the developmental process.

"A lot of traditional entertainment companies have historically been like silos in their organizational design and operating procedure," explains Frascotti. "One thing Hasbro has worked very hard to do is have culture of collaboration throughout the

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company. Today, when we develop new content and brand experiences, we view that as a holistic experience for the consumer. We don't say let's do this first, and everything else will follow. We look at it from the consumer's vantage point and say 'How is an 8-year-old girl, a 6-year-old boy, a 40-year-old guy or a 30-year-old woman going to experience this brand?' And that experience is based on multiple dimensions that can be anything from a toy to a digital short to a commercial or a TV show.

"We are super collaborative from the beginning across platforms, and having consumer insights as a guiding principle tells us what's important and what the core tenets of the brand are. It all has to feel natural and not forced," he adds.

Frascotti believes that Hasbro is just starting to unlock the true value of its brands, which is the underlying reason he is so bullish about the future of the company.


"We are still in the early days of seeing the power of our brand blueprint and the ability to develop great brands and great stories. Over the past year, we are just starting to execute our vision in a meaningful and strong way—it has taken a while to do that," admits Frascotti. "There's enormous potential ahead for us, and we are limited only by our creativity and our ability to tell great stories. We are just scratching the surface of what's possible." ©



A large celebratory graphic for HPD High Point Design L.L.C. congratulating Hasbro. The background is a light blue and green geometric pattern. On the left, there is a large, stylized logo for "my LITTLE PONY" in pink and purple, with a pink pony character (Pinkie Pie) below it. On the right, there is a large, stylized logo for "TRANSFORMERS" in red and black, with a yellow and black Transformer character (Optimus Prime) below it. In the top right corner, there is a circular logo for "ROBOTS IN DISGUISE". The central text reads: "HPD HIGH POINT DESIGN L.L.C. CONGRATULATES Hasbro™ On this well deserved Recognition of Success in Story Telling WE ARE PROUD TO BE YOUR PARTNER !!PD the one-stop destination for all of your hosiery needs". At the bottom, there is a line of text: "1411 Broadway, 8th Floor, New York, NY 10018 (Phone) 212 354 2400 • (Email) HPD@moret.com • (Website) www.moret.com".

# Pics Flick 2016

License! Global presents its annual Flick Pics feature, a roundup of forthcoming films that have strong licensed consumer product potential. **by AMANDA CIOLETTI**

Title & Release Date	Synopsis	Licenseses & Partners
<b>DreamWorks Animation</b>		
<b>Trolls</b> Nov. 4, 2016	 <p>From the creators of <i>Shrek</i> comes the most smart, funny, irreverent animated comedy <i>Trolls</i>. This holiday season, enter a colorful, wondrous world populated by hilariously unforgettable characters and discover the story of the overly optimistic Trolls, with a constant song on their lips, and the comically pessimistic Bergens, who are only happy when they have Trolls in their stomach.</p>	Hasbro (master toy partner).
<b>Boss Baby</b> Jan. 13, 2017	<p>Inspired by Marla Frazee's award-winning picture book, <i>Boss Baby</i> features the voices of Kevin Spacey and Alec Baldwin in this fantastical family comedy.</p>	Currently seeking licenseses/partners.
<b>Captain Underpants</b> June 2, 2017	<p>The <i>Captain Underpants</i> book series by Dav Pilkey tells the story of two mischievous kids, George Beard and Harold Hutchins, who hypnotize their school principal and turn him into their comic book creation, Captain Underpants.</p>	Currently seeking licenseses/partners.



## DreamWorks Animation continued

<p><b>The Croods 2</b> Dec. 22, 2017</p>	<p>The world's first modern family returns in <i>The Croods 2</i> after their international blockbuster debut in 2013.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees/partners.</p>
<p><b>Larrikins</b> Feb. 16, 2018</p>	<p><i>Larrikins</i> tells the story of an uptight bilby (a desert-dwelling marsupial), who has lived a sheltered life in the safety of his family burrow. When he ventures out and becomes privy to a dangerous secret, he finds himself launched on a musical adventure across the mystical and untamed Australian outback.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees/partners.</p>
<p><b>How to Train Your Dragon 3</b> June 29, 2018</p>	<p>The latest installment of the franchise, <i>How to Train Your Dragon 3</i>, continues the epic adventures of Hiccup and Toothless.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees/partners.</p>

## Lionsgate

<p><b>Dirty 30</b> fall 2016</p>	<p>Lifelong friends Kate, Evie and Charlie are in a rut. On the eve of Kate's 30th birthday, she agrees to let Evie and Charlie throw her a party. But what's supposed to be a simple celebration becomes a wild who's who of past and present, quickly spiraling things out of control.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees across select categories.</p>
<p><b>The Wild Life</b> Sept. 9, 2016</p>	<p>On a tiny, exotic island, Mak, an outgoing parrot, lives with his quirky animal friends in paradise. After a violent storm, Mak and his friends wake up to find a strange creature on the beach: Robinson Crusoe. Slowly but surely, they all start living together in harmony, until one day, their comfortable life is overturned by two savage cats who wish to take control of the island. A battle ensues between the cats and the group of friends, but Crusoe and the animals soon discover the true power of friendship.</p>	<p>Currently seeking promotional partners across select categories.</p>
<p><b>Middle School: The Worst Years of my Life</b> Oct. 7, 2016</p>	<p>Based on the <i>New York Times</i> best-seller by novelist James Patterson, <i>Middle School: The Worst Years of My Life</i> chronicles the trials and triumphs of Rafe Khatchadorian. In this live action/animated comedy, Rafe uses his wits to battle bullies, hormones and the tyrannical, test-obsessed Principal Dwight.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees across select categories.</p>
<p><b>Boo! A Madea Halloween</b> Oct. 21, 2016</p>	<p>In <i>Boo! A Madea Halloween</i>, Madea winds up in the middle of mayhem when she spends a hilarious, haunted Halloween fending off killers, paranormal poltergeists, ghosts, ghouls and zombies while keeping a watchful eye on a group of misbehaving teens.</p>	<p>Currently seeking promotional partners across select categories.</p>
<p><b>La La Land</b> Dec. 2, 2016</p>	<p>A modern take on the Hollywood musical from Damien Chazelle, the Academy Award-nominated writer and director of <i>Whiplash</i>, Sebastian and Mia are drawn together by their common desire to do what they love. But as success mounts they are faced with decisions that begin to fray the fragile fabric of their love affair, and the dreams they worked so hard to maintain in each other threaten to rip them apart.</p>	<p>Currently seeking promotional partners across select categories.</p>
<p><b>John Wick 2</b> Feb. 10, 2017</p>	<p>In this sequel to the 2014 film, hitman John Wick is forced back out of retirement by a former associate plotting to seize control of a shadowy international assassins' guild. Bound by a blood oath to help him, John travels to Rome where he squares off against some of the world's deadliest killers.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees and promotional partners across select categories.</p>

Lionsgate continued		
<p><b>Dirty Dancing 30th Anniversary</b> spring 2017</p>	<p>For over three decades, <i>Dirty Dancing</i> has been a mainstay of popular culture. With its romantic storyline, chart-topping songs and unforgettable quotes, the original film became a movie phenomenon, inspiring a stage show, a new, upcoming TV special and generations of fans. As part of the 30th anniversary, ABC will broadcast a re-imagining of this classic film as a musical event and the film will receive a theatrical re-release.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees across select categories.</p>
<p><b>The Shack</b> March 3, 2017</p>	<p>Based on the <i>New York Times</i> best-selling novel, <i>The Shack</i> follows a father's uplifting spiritual journey. After suffering a family tragedy, Mack Phillips spirals into a deep depression causing him to question his innermost beliefs. Facing a crisis of faith, he receives a mysterious letter urging him to an abandoned shack deep in the Oregon wilderness. Despite his doubts, Mack journeys to the shack and encounters an enigmatic trio of strangers led by a woman named Papa. Through this meeting, Mack finds important truths that will transform his understanding of his tragedy and change his life forever.</p>	<p>Currently seeking promotional partners across select categories.</p>
<p><b>Power Rangers</b> March 24, 2017</p>	<p><i>Power Rangers</i> follows five ordinary high school kids who must become something extraordinary when they learn that their small town of Angel Grove—and the world—is on the verge of being obliterated by an alien threat. Chosen by destiny, the heroes quickly discover that they are the only ones who can save the planet. But to do so they will have to overcome their real-life issues and band together as the Power Rangers before it is too late.</p>	<p>Currently seeking promotional partners across select categories. For licensing inquiries, contact Saban Brands.</p>
<p><b>My Little Pony</b> Oct. 6, 2017</p>	<p>A new dark force threatens Ponyville and the Mane Six—Twilight Sparkle, Applejack, Rainbow Dash, Pinkie Pie, Fluttershy and Rarity. They embark on an unforgettable journey beyond Equestria where they meet new friends and exciting challenges on a quest to use the Magic of Friendship and save their home.</p>	<p>Currently seeking promotional partners across select categories. For licensing inquiries, contact Hasbro.</p>
<p><b>Monopoly</b> no release date available</p>	<p>In keeping with a game that has brought many hours of joy for so long, <i>Monopoly</i> will be a film for all ages that is heartwarming and full of action and adventure. The story centers on a boy from Baltic Avenue who uses both Chance and Community in a quest to make his fortune, taking him on a fun, adventure-filled journey. It's about making your own luck, what makes you truly rich and, of course, avoiding jail time.</p>	<p>Currently seeking promotional partners across select categories. For licensing inquiries, contact Hasbro.</p>
<p><b>Robin Hood</b> no release date available</p>	<p>A battle-hardened crusader and a Moorish Warrior mount a revolt against the corrupt English Crown in a gritty, stylized re-imagining of the classic tale.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees and promotional partners across select categories.</p>
<p><b>Stronger</b> no release date available</p>	<p>Inspired by a true story and based on the <i>New York Times</i> best-seller, <i>Stronger</i> tells the story of a working-class Boston man whose iconic photo from the 2013 Boston Marathon bombing captured the hearts of the world. <i>Stronger</i> is the deeply personal account of the heroic journey that came after that photo—defining a man's inner courage, a community's pride, a family's bond and an unexpectedly tenacious love.</p>	<p>Currently seeking promotional partners across select categories.</p>
<p><b>Wonder</b> no release date available</p>	<p>Based on the <i>New York Times</i> best-selling book by R.J. Palacio.</p>	<p>Currently seeking promotional partners across select categories.</p>



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<p><b>The Secret Life of Pets</b> July 8, 2016</p>	<p><i>The Secret Life of Pets</i> is a comedy about the lives our pets lead after we leave for work or school each day. Louis C.K., Eric Stonestreet and Kevin Hart make their animated feature-film debuts alongside co-stars Jenny Slate, Ellie Kemper, Lake Bell, Dana Carvey, Hannibal Buress, Bobby Moynihan, Steve Coogan and Albert Brooks.</p>	<p>Spin Master (global master toy partner), Random House, Wonder Forge, Franco, Hybrid Jem, Mad Engine, Unique and PetSmart.</p>
<p><b>Sing</b> Dec. 21, 2016</p>	<p>Matthew McConaughey, Reese Witherspoon, Seth MacFarlane, Scarlett Johansson, John C. Reilly, Taron Egerton and Tori Kelly star in an animated feature about finding the shining star that lives inside all of us. The film features more than 85 hit songs.</p>	<p>Contact NBCUniversal Brand Development for opportunities.</p>
<p><b>Fast 8</b> April 14, 2017</p>	<p>On the heels of <i>Furious 7</i> comes the new chapter in one of the most popular and enduring motion-picture serials of all time. Vin Diesel leads the returning cast.</p>	<p>Contact NBCUniversal Brand Development for opportunities.</p>
<p><b>The Mummy</b> June 9, 2017</p>	<p>A legend that has endured since the dawn of man is reborn in <i>The Mummy</i>, Universal Pictures' all-new epic action-adventure.</p>	<p>Contact NBCUniversal Brand Development for opportunities.</p>
<p><b>Despicable Me 3</b> June 30, 2017</p>	<p>The team that brought audiences <i>Despicable Me</i>, <i>Despicable Me 2</i> and <i>Minions</i> returns to continue the adventures of Gru, Lucy, their adorable daughters Margo, Edith and Agnes and the Minions.</p>	<p>Contact NBCUniversal Brand Development for opportunities.</p>
<p><b>Pitch Perfect 3</b> Dec. 22, 2017</p>	<p>Anna Kendrick and Rebel Wilson headline the returning cast of <i>Pitch Perfect 3</i>, the follow-up to summer 2015's blockbuster hit.</p>	<p>Contact NBCUniversal Brand Development for opportunities.</p>
<p><b>Jurassic World Sequel</b> June 22, 2018</p>	<p>Executive producer Steven Spielberg and stars Chris Pratt and Bryce Dallas Howard return for Universal Pictures and Amblin Entertainment's <i>Jurassic World Sequel</i>, a follow-up to one of the biggest blockbusters in the history of cinema.</p>	<p>Contact NBCUniversal Brand Development for opportunities.</p>

**Paramount Pictures**

<p><b>Star Trek Beyond</b> July 22, 2016</p>	<p><i>Star Trek Beyond</i>, the next installment in the global <i>Star Trek</i> franchise, created by Gene Roddenberry and re-introduced by J.J. Abrams in 2009, returns with director Justin Lin at the helm of this epic voyage of the U.S.S. Enterprise and her intrepid crew. In <i>Beyond</i>, the Enterprise crew explores the furthest reaches of uncharted space, where they encounter a mysterious new enemy who puts them and everything the Federation stands for to the test.</p>	<p>Funko, Rizzoli, Rittenhouse, Anovos, QMx, Rubie's Costume Co., Snap Creative, Zinc Group and Goldenlink. CBS Consumer Products manages licensing and is seeking licensees in additional categories.</p>
<p><b>Jack Reacher: Never Go Back</b> Oct. 21, 2016</p>	<p>No synopsis available.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees/partners across all categories.</p>
<p><b>Monster Trucks</b> Jan. 13, 2017</p>	<p>No synopsis available.</p>	<p>Spin Master and Reliance.</p>
<p><b>xXx 3: The Return of Zander Cage</b> Jan. 20, 2017</p>	<p>No synopsis available.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees/partners across all categories.</p>



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Paramount Pictures continued		
<p><b>Ghost in the Shell</b> March 31, 2017</p>	No synopsis available.	Currently seeking licensees/ partners across all categories.
<p><b>Baywatch</b> May 19, 2017</p>	No synopsis available.	Currently seeking licensees/ partners across all categories.
<p><b>Transformers 5</b> June 23, 2017</p>	No synopsis available.	Currently seeking promotional partners across all categories. For licensing inquiries, contact Hasbro.
<p><b>Sherlock Gnomes</b> Jan. 12, 2018</p>	No synopsis available.	Currently seeking licensees/ partners across all categories.
<p><b>Transformers 6</b> June 8, 2018</p>	No synopsis available.	Currently seeking promotional partners across all categories. For licensing inquiries, contact Hasbro.

**Sony Pictures**

<p><b>Ghostbusters</b> July 22, 2016</p>		<p><i>Ghostbusters</i> makes its long-awaited return with a cast of new characters. Thirty years after the original franchise, director Paul Feig brings his fresh take to the supernatural comedy, joined by Melissa McCarthy, Kristen Wiig, Kate McKinnon, Leslie Jones and Chris Hemsworth.</p>	<p>Mattel, LEGO, Activision, IGT, Simon &amp; Schuster, Hybrid, Fab Starpoint, New Era, Kellogg's, Dannon, Slim Jim, Purell, Mars, Papa John's, Progressive Insurance and more.</p>
<p><b>The Smurfs: The Lost Village</b> April 7, 2017</p>		<p>The beloved blue creatures are back for Sony Pictures Animations' brand-new, computer-animated feature film. The new movie finds Smurfette and her brothers trekking through the uncharted Enchanted Forest to find a fabled village, before the evil wizard Gargamel does.</p>	<p>Ubisoft, Verristar Entertainment, Jakks Pacific, Tech 4 Kids, C-Life, MJC Intl. Group, Hypnotic Hats, World Trade Jewelers, Simon &amp; Schuster, Bendon and more.</p>
<p><b>Jumanji</b> July 28, 2017</p>		<p>Directed by Jake Kasdan, with a screenplay by Chris McKenna, Erik Sommers, Scott Rosenberg and Jeff Pinkner, <i>Jumanji</i> is based on the book by Chris Van Allsburg. The film will be produced by Matt Tolmach and William Teitler.</p>	<p>Partnerships currently in discussion. Seeking additional partners.</p>
<p><b>Untitled Emoji Movie</b> Aug. 11, 2017</p>		<p>The untitled Emoji movie reveals the secret world inside your phone. It's a world where emojis come alive (when they are not being texted) and journey through apps, with each having its own wild and fun world as they try to get to their ultimate destination, The Cloud. It's the "app-venture" of a lifetime.</p>	<p>Partnerships currently in discussion. Seeking additional partners.</p>



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Twentieth Century Fox

<p><b>Independence Day: Resurgence</b> June 24, 2016</p>		<p>After <i>Independence Day</i> redefined the event movie genre, the next epic chapter delivers global catastrophe on an unimaginable scale. Using recovered alien technology, the nations of Earth have collaborated on an immense defense program to protect the planet. But nothing can prepare us for the aliens' advanced and unprecedented force. Only the ingenuity of a few brave men and women can bring our world back from the brink of extinction.</p>	<p>Cepia Toys, Funko, Titan Books, C-Life Group, Accco Brands, Attop Technology Co. and Rubie's Costume Co.</p>
<p><b>Ice Age: Collision Course</b> July 22, 2016</p>		<p>Scrat's epic pursuit of the elusive acorn catapults him into the universe where he accidentally sets off a series of cosmic events that transform and threaten the Ice Age world. To save themselves, Sid, Manny, Diego and the rest of the herd must leave their home and embark on a quest full of comedy and adventure, traveling to exotic new lands and encountering a host of colorful new characters.</p>	<p>Commonwealth Toy, Bonnier Publishing, Zuru, Headstart International, Gipsy International, Toy Factory, Bendon, Hallmark, Titan Books, Blue Ocean Entertainment/Publishing, Phidal Publishing, Carlton Books and Lidl Hypermarkets.</p>
<p><b>Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children</b> Sept. 30, 2016</p>		<p>When his beloved grandfather leaves Jake clues to a mystery that spans different worlds and times, he finds a magical place known as Miss Peregrine's School for Peculiar Children. But the mystery and danger deepen as he gets to know the residents and learns about their special powers and their terrifying enemies. Ultimately, Jake discovers that only his own special "peculiarity" can save his new friends. Tim Burton directs.</p>	<p>Funko, Quirk Books, Loungefly, Surreal Entertainment and AC/DC.</p>
<p><b>War for the Planet of the Apes</b> July 14, 2017</p>		<p>No synopsis available.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees/partners across all categories.</p>
<p><b>Ferdinand</b> July 21, 2017</p>		<p>No synopsis available.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees/partners across all categories.</p>
<p><b>Alien: Covenant</b> Aug. 4, 2017</p>		<p>Ridley Scott returns to the universe he created in <i>Alien</i> with <i>Alien: Covenant</i>, the second chapter in a prequel trilogy that began with <i>Prometheus</i> and connects directly to Scott's 1979 seminal work of science fiction. Bound for a remote planet on the far side of the galaxy, the crew of the colony ship <i>Covenant</i> discovers what they think is an uncharted paradise, but is actually a dark, dangerous world whose sole inhabitant is the "synthetic" David (Michael Fassbender), survivor of the doomed <i>Prometheus</i> expedition.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees/partners across all categories.</p>
<p><b>The Greatest Showman on Earth</b> Dec. 25, 2017</p>		<p>No synopsis available.</p>	<p>Currently seeking licensees/partners across all categories.</p>



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## The Walt Disney Company–Lucasfilm

**Rogue One:  
A Star Wars Story**  
Dec. 16, 2016

Gareth Edwards is directing *Rogue One*, which tells the story of resistance fighters who have united to steal plans to the dreaded Death Star.

LEGO, Hasbro, Mattel, Jakks Pacific, Spin Master and Rubie's Costume Co.

**Star Wars:  
Episode VIII**  
Dec. 15, 2017

No synopsis available.

Partners to be announced.

## The Walt Disney Company–Marvel Studios

**Doctor Strange**  
Nov. 4, 2016



Marvel's *Doctor Strange* follows the story of the talented neurosurgeon Doctor Stephen Strange who, after a tragic car accident, must put ego aside and learn the secrets of a hidden world of mysticism and alternate dimensions. Based in New York City's Greenwich Village, Doctor Strange must act as an intermediary between the real world and what lies beyond, utilizing a vast array of metaphysical abilities and artifacts to protect the Marvel cinematic universe.

Hasbro, LEGO, Mattel, Funko, Rubie's Costume Co., Mad Engine and Jay Franco.

**Guardians of the Galaxy  
Vol. 2**  
May 5, 2017



Set to the backdrop of *Awesome Mixtape #2*, Marvel's *Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2* continues the team's adventures as they traverse the outer reaches of the cosmos. The Guardians must fight to keep their newfound family together as they unravel the mysteries of Peter Quill's true parentage. Old foes become new allies and fan-favorite characters from the classic comics will come to our heroes' aid as the Marvel cinematic universe continues to expand.

Partners to be announced.

**Thor: Ragnarok**  
Nov. 3, 2017



No synopsis available.

Partners to be announced.



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## The Walt Disney Company–Pixar Animation Studios

### Finding Dory

June 17, 2016



*Finding Dory* reunites the friendly but forgetful blue Tang fish with her loved ones, and everyone learns a few things about the true meaning of family along the way.

Bandai, Zuru, Funko, Swimways, Play-Doh, Spin Master, Jakks Pacific, Scento, American Greetings, Conair, Lip Smacker, Alex Woo, Trina Turk, Hanna Andersson, Jay Franco, Zak Designs, Children's Apparel Network, Handcraft, ACI, Global Brands Group, Aussie, Band-Aid, Bounty, Coppertone, Ice Chips, Juicy Juice, Kellogg's, Kraft Macaroni & Cheese, Nature's Harvest, Pirate's Booty, Quaker, Subway, SuperValu and Yoplait GoGurt.

## The Walt Disney Company–Walt Disney Studios

### Pete's Dragon

Aug. 12, 2016



A re-imagining of the 1977 Disney classic, *Pete's Dragon* will blend live action and CGI to tell the story of the special bond between an orphaned boy, Pete, and his best friend, Elliott, who just happens to be a dragon.

Bentex, Build-A-Bear, Freeze, GBG, Hybrid, Jakks Pacific, Jay Franco and Mad Engine.

### Moana

Nov. 23, 2016

Three thousand years ago, the greatest sailors in the world voyaged across the vast Pacific, discovering the many islands of Oceania. But then, for a millennium, their voyages stopped—and no one knows why. *Moana* is a CG-animated feature film about an adventurous teenager who sails out on a daring mission to save her people. During her journey, Moana meets the once-mighty demigod Maui, who guides her in her quest to become a master wayfinder. Together, they sail across the open ocean on an action-packed voyage, encountering enormous monsters and impossible odds, and along the way, Moana fulfills the ancient quest of her ancestors and discovers the one thing she's always sought: her own identity.

Partners to be announced.

### Beauty and the Beast

March 17, 2017

Disney's *Beauty and the Beast* is a live action re-telling of the studio's animated classic, which re-fashions the classic characters from the tale as old as time for a contemporary audience, staying true to the original music while updating the score with several new songs. Emma Watson, Dan Stevens, Luke Evans, Kevin Kline, Josh Gad, Ewan McGregor, Stanley Tucci, Gugu Mbatha-Raw, Audra McDonald, Ian McKellen and Emma Thompson star.

Partners to be announced.





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The Walt Disney Company—Walt Disney Studios continued

<p><b>Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Men Tell No Tales</b> May 26, 2017</p>	<p>Thrust into an all-new adventure, a down-on-his-luck Captain Jack Sparrow finds the winds of ill fortune blowing even more strongly when a crew of deadly ghosts, led by his old nemesis, the terrifying Captain Salazar, escape from the Devil's Triangle, determined to kill every pirate at sea... including him. Captain Jack's only hope of survival lies in seeking out the legendary Trident of Poseidon, a powerful artifact that bestows upon its possessor total control over the seas.</p>	<p>Partners to be announced.</p>
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Warner Bros. Pictures


<p><b>Suicide Squad</b> Aug. 5, 2016</p>		<p>The action-adventure feature film <i>Suicide Squad</i> will bring DC Comics' Super-Villain team to the big screen under the direction of David Ayer.</p>	<p>Targeted licensing program. Partners not yet announced.</p>
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<p><b>Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them</b> Nov. 18, 2016</p>		<p>Based on best-selling author J.K. Rowling's original story and screenwriting debut, <i>Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them</i> is set in an extension of her familiar wizarding world, featuring magical creatures and characters inspired by Harry Potter's Hogwarts textbook and its fictitious author, Newt Scamander.</p>	<p>Broad licensing program. Partners not yet announced.</p>
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<p><b>The LEGO Batman Movie</b> Feb. 10, 2017</p>		<p>No synopsis available.</p>	<p>Broad licensing program. Partners not yet announced.</p>
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<p><b>Kong: Skull Island</b> March 10, 2017</p>	<p><i>Kong: Skull Island</i> is a bold new take on the King of Apes.</p>	<p>Targeted licensing program. Partners not yet announced.</p>
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<p><b>King Arthur</b> March 24, 2017</p>	<p>No synopsis available.</p>	<p>Small licensing program. Partners not yet announced.</p>
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<p><b>Wonder Woman</b> June 2, 2017</p>		<p>No synopsis available.</p>	<p>Broad licensing program. Partners not yet announced.</p>
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<p><b>LEGO: Ninjago</b> September 2017</p>	<p>No synopsis available.</p>	<p>Broad licensing program. Partners not yet announced.</p>
<p><b>Justice League Part One</b> November 2017</p>	<p>No synopsis available.</p>	<p>Broad licensing program. Partners not yet announced.</p>
<p><b>The Flash</b> March 2018</p>	<p>No synopsis available.</p>	<p>Broad licensing program. Partners not yet announced.</p>
<p><b>Ready Player One</b> 2018</p>	<p>No synopsis available.</p>	<p>Targeted licensing program. Partners not yet announced.</p>
<p><b>Aquaman</b> 2018</p>	<p>No synopsis available.</p>	<p>Broad licensing program. Partners not yet announced.</p>
<p><b>Scooby-Doo Feature Film</b> 2018</p>	<p>No synopsis available.</p>	<p>Broad licensing program. Partners not yet announced.</p>
<p><b>Justice League Part Two</b> 2019</p>	<p>No synopsis available.</p>	<p>Broad licensing program. Partners not yet announced.</p>
<p><b>Cyborg</b> 2020</p>	<p>No synopsis available.</p>	<p>Broad licensing program. Partners not yet announced.</p>
<p><b>Green Lantern Corps.</b> 2020</p>	<p>No synopsis available.</p>	<p>Broad licensing program. Partners not yet announced.</p>



# Pics TV Flick 2016

by AMANDA CIOLETTI

The line is continuing to blur between content platforms—whether it be terrestrial TV, film, digital and mobile content, streaming networks, multi-channel networks or viral videos. The fact is, the average person doesn't really care anymore where they get their content, they just want good content that is fresh, engaging and that is easily accessed at the time and place they want to interact with it.

Gone are the days of network or franchise loyalty and ushered in is the era of on-demand.

With that in mind, there are some very good television properties (expanded in this instance to include content from streaming networks such as Netflix) out there, especially now as the new golden era of shorter-form content seems to be in full swing. And with this new content comes the potential for consumer product programs, both broadening awareness for the TV properties themselves and also offering much-needed additional revenue streams.

You can see this trend toward content that translates across multiple platforms perhaps best in the recent spring television Upfront presentations, the annual consortium of major broadcasters that announces the lineup for the coming seasons to advertisers.

It appears that many of the networks value stability and familiarity above all, both rebooting and re-inventing old IP for new viewers, or building new series around reliable tropes and franchises. Think

"Supergirl" from Warner Bros., which moved from CBS and now has been picked up by The CW and capitalizes on the ongoing superhero genre; the re-vamp of the 2001 series "24" with "24: Legacy," a spin-off that will debut in 2017; the new "Star Trek" series, which will launch early next year first on CBS' terrestrial network then move exclusively online; and many, many more.

Film-to-TV re-tellings appear to be a popular move with networks as they scheduled multiple for the upcoming fall and winter seasons such as "Training Day," based on the 2001 Denzel Washington drama, at CBS; a much-buzzed about re-telling of the 1980s *Lethal Weapon* film franchise from Fox; and the new series "The Exorcist," again from Fox, which is a TV version of the film and book franchise that scared millions over the past several decades; and on the children's side, "School of Rock," based on the 2003 movie, was picked up at Nickelodeon.

"In a cluttered world with hundreds of choices... if the right remake or spinoff comes along... there's no reason not to pick it up, as you already have the awareness and it makes the launch and marketing easier," said Jennifer Salke, president, NBC Entertainment, to *The Hollywood Reporter*.

And while these are just some highlights of the new prospective big properties that are on the horizon, each with licensing potential, *License! Global* has rounded up even more that will likely appear both on-screen and at retail soon, if they're not already there. ©

## WHAT'S NEXT FOR TV?

*License! Global* has compiled a list of some of the up-and-coming TV series it predicts to have strong licensed consumer product potential, whether they air on traditional networks or are strictly on SVOD services.

### ABC

"Downward Dog" – NEW

### AMC

"Better Call Saul"  
"Fear the Walking Dead"  
"Preacher" – NEW

### Cartoon Network

"Mike Tyson Mysteries"  
"Powerpuff Girls" – NEW  
"Rick and Morty"

### CBS

"The Exorcist" – NEW  
"MacGyver" – NEW  
"Training Day" – NEW  
"Star Trek" – NEW

### The CW

"DC's Legends of Tomorrow"  
"Riverdale" – NEW

### Disney Channel

"Rapunzel" – NEW

### Disney Junior

"The Lion Guard"  
"PJ Masks" – NEW  
"Puppy Dog Tails" – NEW  
"Vampirina" – NEW

### Disney XD

"Big Hero 6: The Series" – NEW  
"Yo-Kai Watch" – NEW

### Discovery

"Deadliest Catch: Dungeon's Cove" – NEW

### Fox

"24: Legacy" – NEW

"Empire"  
"The Exorcist" – NEW  
"Gotham"  
"Lethal Weapon" – NEW  
"Star" – NEW

### MTV

"Wonderland" – NEW

### NBC

"The Good Place" – NEW  
"Late Show with Stephen Colbert"  
"Powerless" – NEW

### Netflix

"Danger Mouse" – NEW  
"Daredevil"  
"Dinotrux"  
"DreamWorks' Trollhunters" – NEW  
"Fuller House" – NEW  
"Noddy Toyland Detective" – NEW  
"Voltron Legendary Defender" – NEW



### Nickelodeon

"Blaze and the Monster Machines"  
"Glitch Techs" – NEW  
"The Loud House"  
"Pig Goat Banana Cricket"  
"School of Rock" – NEW  
"Shimmer and Shine"

### E!

"The Royals"

(\*NEW indicates series that are brand-new, whether currently on-air with its first season as of press time or soon-to-air.)

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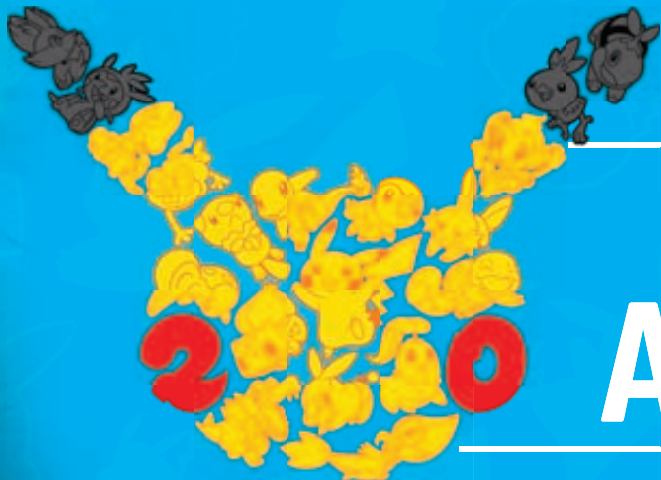






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# POKÉMON™

## COLLECTS

# 20 YEARS



**MONIKA SALAZAR**  
*director, licensing, The Pokémon Company International*



**J.C. SMITH**  
*consumer marketing director, The Pokémon Company International*

The Pokémon Company International is ringing in a celebratory anniversary year for its multi-platform property that will continue the brand's tradition of collectibility, interactivity and entertainment.

**P**okémon is celebrating its 20th anniversary, and The Pokémon Company International has a year of events, programs and new licensing partners lined up to mark a banner year for this multi-platform powerhouse brand.

The “Pokémon Red” and “Pokémon Green” video games, released in Japan in 1996 for Nintendo Game Boy, marked the official birth of the franchise. The video games (renamed “Pokémon Red” and “Pokémon Blue”) were released two years later in the U.S. in 1998, and went on to become the No. 2 best-selling video game of all-time with 279 million copies sold.

The Pokémon trading card game, which also launched first in Japan in 1996 and later in the U.S., offered fans another way to connect with the brand. More than 21.5 billion Pokémon trading cards are currently in circulation.

In 1998, the “Pokémon” animated TV series debuted in North America to big viewership numbers with the episode “Pokémon—I Choose You!” which, within a month of its debut, garnered 1.5 million viewers in its Saturday morning



time slot. Now with 19 seasons and 800 episodes produced in 30 languages, the “Pokémon” animated series has become an evergreen property.

One secret of the brand’s success is the variety of ways Pokémon aficionados can express their fandom.

“The brand has many different ways for people to explore the world of Pokémon,” says J.C. Smith, consumer marketing director, The Pokémon Company International. “People can watch the show, play the video game and trade the collector cards. The brand appeals to people who like to collect and trade, communicate and battle or role play, dress up and go to events. The key is that the brand is approachable and fun.”

Retailers love the brand for its ability to keep fans engaged.

“Over the last 20 years, we’ve watched Pokémon open up a world of imagination for kids, connecting kids and collectors with the characters they love,” says Jamie Uitdenhoven, vice president, general merchandising manager, Toys ‘R’ Us, U.S. “Pokémon continues to engage its fans of all ages through the addition of new characters and platforms, while maintaining the game’s basic core of fun and pretend play.”

“The ability to collect, battle and the strategy behind it all drives gamers of all ages to love playing Pokémon, along with the nostalgia the franchise has been able to achieve over the years,” says Eric Bright, senior director, merchandising, GameStop.

“We’ve been feeding the appetite of Pokémon fans for the past 20 years, and the brand continues to be a top-performing license at Target,”

says Lee Henderson, spokesperson, Target.

This November, Target will be releasing a series of exclusive Pokémon trading card content.

### Multiple Ways to Connect

Social media has certainly contributed to the growth and popularity of the franchise.

“Communication is a big part of the brand,” says Smith. “Gaming has evolved from console to mobile, and the social media platform has allowed fans to create their own Pokémon groups and communicate with other fans all over the world.”

The brand is not just regional to Japan and North America, either. It has huge international appeal globally, and the “Pokémon” animated series is broadcast in 160 countries. Smith says fan fiction based on new Pokémon characters flourishes on social media, as well.

“When new characters are introduced, fans have a forum to talk about them and invent their own stories about the characters,” says Smith.

The franchise also includes feature length films, with the 19th movie, *Pokémon the Movie: Volcanion and the Ingenious Magearna*, set to debut this fall.

“We continue to have great content across many platforms,” says Smith.

Video games continue to evolve as well, with new video games “Pokémon Sun” and “Pokémon Moon” for systems in the Nintendo 3DS family debuting in November that will include a new world, new Pokémon characters and new adventures.

“Twenty years of Pokémon is such an incredible achievement, and GameStop is really proud to have partnered with Nintendo to bring it to our customers through the years,” says Bright. “The partnership between Nintendo, The Pokémon Company International and GameStop is at an all-time high and allows for us to make sure our associates are really knowledgeable about the games and are able to educate and discuss with our customers. Our partnership also



allows us to offer 'only at GameStop' exclusives that we know our customers love."

Pokémon trading cards continually offer new opportunities for play via streaming services such as Twitch, live streaming competitions and other platforms.

"Technology will open up more doors so we can showcase what people love about Pokémon in new and different ways," says Smith.

### Events Drive Brand Appeal

Fan events also drive the brand's popularity, whether it's through Pokémon battle competitions, cosplay at events or live character appearances at select retail locations. More than 450,000 fans compete in battles sponsored by community leagues throughout the year. Each year, players from all over the globe who



have qualified through the Championship Series Ramped compete at the invitation-only Pokémon World Championships to become the next Pokémon TCG or Video Game World Champion. The 20th anniversary will create more opportunities for fans to interact with their favorite Pokémon characters at events and through in-store appearances.

### Keeping the Brand Hot

Licensing is a big component of the Pokémon brand's lasting impact. Toys have always been a significant aspect of licensing, and TOMY, the brand's master toy partner, has created special toys.

"We've partnered with the Pokémon brand for 20 years in Japan and this provides us with a huge pool of insights and knowledge," says Morgan Weyl, director, boys' toys, TOMY. "We have core fans, deeply engaged with the brand, within several department of our organization who help the company bring an authentic product experience to market."

The Pokémon Company International has also signed an agreement with retailer Build-A Bear for experiential push.

With more than 720 Pokémon characters in the Pokémon world, TOMY is able to refresh its figure and plush assortments several times a year to make sure consumers always have something new to look for on a regular basis.

"We're focused on providing an authentic experience to the fans, and we try to engage our consumers on a treasure quest, providing different products and characters for different demographics and different retailers," says Weyl.

### Focus on Fashion

The franchise has its eye on fashion, as well, and has entered a partnership with the Council for Fashion Designers of America, a non-profit trade association whose membership consists of more than 400 of America's foremost womenswear, menswear, jewelry and accessory designers.

"Pokémon is an iconic brand that is globally known and loved by fans for generations, so there's a lot of untapped market development. We believe we have





a big opportunity to capture more of the mid-tier and upstairs marketplace," says Monika Salazar, director, licensing, The Pokémon Company International. "We're now embarking on a fashion strategy that goes beyond our core boy demographic to evolve into apparel, accessories, footwear and jewelry categories that are trend- and lifestyle-driven and combine fashion and technology in ways that make sense for consumers."

Salazar says The Pokémon Company International is targeting different audiences with specialized programs to make a significant impact across multiple demographics. In honor of the 20th anniversary, the company proclaimed February 16 Pokémon Day, and held an exclusive event featuring actress Drew Barrymore.

Pop culture retailer Japan LA featured the first Pokémon store at its Melrose Place location in Los Angeles, Calif. And to reach the mid-tier market, retail partner Hot Topic featured in-store Pokémon



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signage and specially curated product at stores nationwide.

“We’re carefully rolling out featured space within specific retailers and will do one pop-up store a year,” says Salazar.

Salazar says that while the company is expanding the brand’s reach, The Pokémon Company International is choosing its partners carefully.

“We’re being selective and curating our roster with partners who are best-in-class,” she says. “Our partners must have someone on the team who understands the core elements of the brand and how those can be translated into 2D and 3D designs. We also want partners who invest in their company through innovation and technology to find new



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ways to deliver product quickly to consumers.”

It's a strategy that has worked so far, says TOMY.

“The Pokémon Company International managed throughout the years, by sometimes restricting their number of licensees and products on the market, to maintain a sense of exclusivity, rareness to the brand and its dedicated products. It kept the core fans on a constant chase for products,” says Weyl.

### The Value of Pokémon

Licensing partners across the board agree and say that the addition of the Pokémon brand to their portfolios is a huge asset.

“Pokémon was really the first anime-type trading card game that crossed over into multi-media platforms and merchandising, so the kids it grabbed back then are still fans today,” says Kim Cauley, vice president, licensing, Freeze. “Pokémon corporate continues to



release new content and games, and, combined with their bold moves like the Super Bowl commercial and pop-up shops, gain the brand-new, younger fans every day.”

Cauley says that the brand is also “very much a unisex brand where others of its kind tend





to gear predominately male.”

“My daughter was a huge fan when she was younger,” she says. “She collected the cards, was addicted to the TV series, made me spend a fortune on product and even attended the live show at Radio City Music Hall. Today she is a 19-year-old freshman in college and is thrilled and proud to wear our fashion-forward knit tops,” she says.

Freeze’s Pokémon character t-shirts sell as well as or better than competing properties that have huge theatrical releases and marketing budgets, says Cauley.

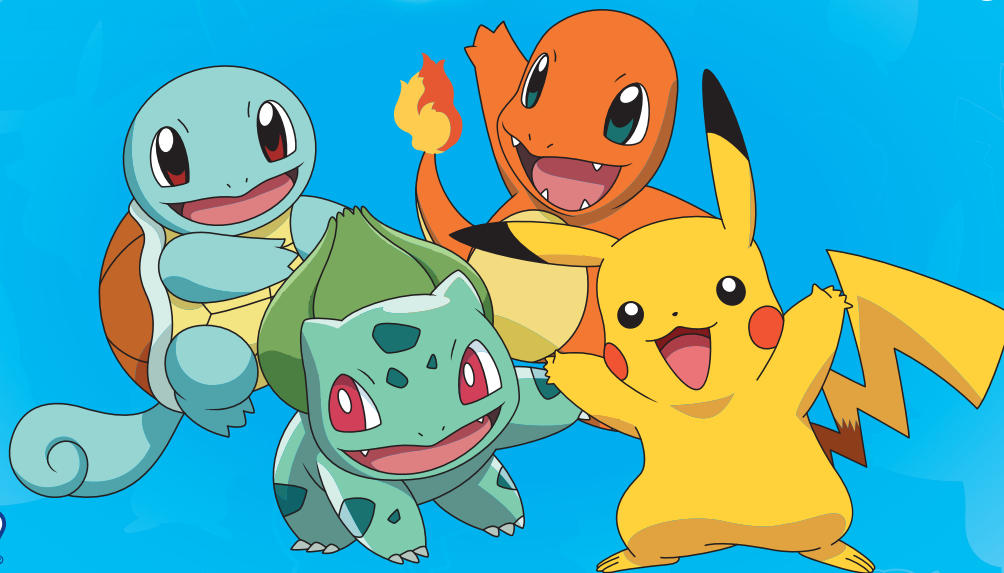
“They continue to refresh and re-ignite through new content, product, characters, style guides and innovative marketing,” she says.

The Pokémon Company International is adding to its roster of licensees and recently signed ThinkGeek, Silver Buffalo and Underboss.

“The Pokémon franchise continues to

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## CONGRATULATIONS ON 20 YEARS OF CATCHING EM' ALL!



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resonate with fans around the world in part because of the ability of The Pokémon Company International to create immediately recognizable and likeable characters like Pikachu and Ash, while consistently adding new Pokémon characters for fans to collect,” says Chris Parrish, director, licensing, ThinkGeek. “The company has proven very successful at developing new content across multiple platforms from video games and card games to broadcast TV and movies, and this constant content creation and storytelling keeps current fans engaged in the brand while bringing new consumers into the franchise.”

Parrish says ThinkGeek’s new line is “designed for fans by fans.”

“Whenever possible, we try to inject humor into our products or provide subtle nods and cues, such as the ‘secret handshake,’ that diehard Pokémon fans will instantly recognize. We are grateful to have the support of both the commercial and creative teams at Pokémon who encourage this creativity, and we’re certain these characteristics will culminate in a product launch later this year that will delight both fans and retailers alike,” he says. ©

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# STRIKING WHILE HOT

Striker Entertainment has the corner market on edgy properties. *License! Global* sits down with its co-founders to discuss the history of the company, its past successes and its red-hot future.

by AMANDA CIOLETTI



**MARC MOSTMAN**  
partner, Striker Entertainment



**RUSSELL BINDER**  
partner, Striker Entertainment

In the licensing world, if you have an edgier property, you have likely had a conversation with Striker Entertainment.

Striker is a Los Angeles, Calif.-based marketing and licensing agency that specializes in bringing hot pop culture brands to market via consumer product programs.

Founded by licensing veterans Russell Binder and Marc Mostman, the company only formally came into being in 2007, but since has grown to represent some of the biggest film, television and gaming titles in recent history.

Binder and Mostman both bring more than two decades of entertainment and licensing experience to the table—Mostman has held positions within the video gaming industry, at Paramount and later at Disney Interactive, before he struck out on his own; while Binder was introduced to the business by legendary licensing executive Jay Roth (also Binder's step-father). Binder and Mostman's careers intersected over the years, at times working as peers, and a friendship was formed.

Binder and Mostman joined forces with their first big account—Lionsgate's gruesome horror film franchise, *Saw*.

"When Marc and I got together for our first project, the *Saw 2* movie from Lionsgate, we saw that the business was changing and

realized that we could have an independent experience in the Hollywood system while working on very relevant, very high-profile, genre IP, and that we could compete on some level with the big studios," says Binder.

In 2009, Summit Entertainment, now a part of Lionsgate, catapulted Striker onto its next project, the mega-franchise *Twilight*, and therefore into established agency territory.

"What solidified Striker was our connection with Summit," says Mostman. "They were looking for an independent licensing agency for the *Twilight* property, which was little known at the time. But then, of course, it blew up to become a massive worldwide success, and from that, Striker was officially on the map."

Striker built an impressive and robust product program for the *Twilight* franchise.

The fruits of that labor allowed Striker to re-invest in itself, growing its business and expanding to become the full-service agency that it currently is.

"The *Twilight* franchise enabled us to grow from a smaller-sized agency into a boutique, turnkey licensing team. We decided to invest back into Striker and build competent team members and departments that are fully functional across all areas of licensing on a





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global basis,” says Binder. “*Twilight* was the property that poured nitrous in our tank.”

The work Striker did on *Twilight* was immediately well received, earning the company its first official International Licensing Industry Merchandisers’ Association awards in 2009—the first of many.

From there, it was a domino effect, with each project leading to the next, and each one growing bigger and bigger.

Its next big win? Rovio’s “Angry Birds,” a gamble at the time—but a lucrative one—that launched mobile games into licensing.

“Luck and hard work have been on our side in finding great IP and properties that have potential to grow, not only domestically, but globally,” continues Binder.

Says Mostman: “We were told that

*Twilight* was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and then were told the same thing with ‘Angry Birds.’ But what makes us unique is that we are now known in the industry for being able to identify really good content and deliver a solid program to retail around the world. Now when we talk to major licensees or the big retailers, they ask us what is coming next because we have an eye on emerging trends and things that have the potential to break out.”

“Angry Birds” rolled into the *Hunger Games* franchise, and that too hit big at retail and in theaters, which then led to representation for AMC’s ongoing TV series “*The Walking Dead*.”

“We focus not only on building consumer product programs, but the marketing value that licensing brings to the table,” says Mostman. “We look at licensing as creating ancillary revenue and as something that creates an experience that engages customers and drives awareness, but also fills the theaters or brings eyes to the TV screen.”

Binder refers to Striker as a “mainstream geek” outfit, and it’s an apt association—after all, geek is what’s happening these days.

“A term that describes our sweet spot as an agency is ‘mainstream geek,’ which is content that appeals to the Comic-Con crowd of 18- to 35- or 40-year-olds,” explains Binder. “We tend to gravitate toward properties that are not necessarily G-rated, but to properties that have a little, and in some cases a ton, of edge to them. The kids’ space has been traditionally controlled by the big children’s entertainment companies, but just about anyone with a video camera and a computer can get to teenagers and young adults where, in the digital world, distribution is democratized. If content, via whatever channel it is delivered, is great, more often than not it is going to be found.

We gravitate towards projects that appeal very much to our creative sensibilities, but that must also have the right sequence of DNA to be consumer product programs and translate into products that fans want to buy. The projects need to be more than just a media event.”

It’s a sentiment that Mostman echoes as well.

“We go after things that we like, and we go after things that will go bigger and broader than a typical property,” he says. “We like to bet on properties that make sense, that we feel have a shot at success and ones that we can easily identify and service the target audience for.”

On deck for Striker now are several new properties that are certainly ones to watch and, if history is any indication, likely to make an impact at retail and in pop culture.

“The focus for the future is to stay ahead of the curve and to continue to study where media is going and where the greatest area of penetration is occurring. We want to continue to identify content that naturally translates into consumer products and pushes the envelope while staying true to who we are as a company, team and culture,” says Binder.

One that the duo predicts will satisfy all that criteria? Scottgames’ “*Five Nights at Freddy’s*.”

The horror-themed video game franchise takes place at Freddy Fazbear’s Pizza, a family restaurant and arcade. But at night, the restaurant’s life-sized animatronic characters come to life and wreak havoc.

The property is resonating well with gamers, and is





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expanding to include a forthcoming feature film, YouTube video content, publishing and, thanks to Striker, additional consumer products.

“The early retail heat on this property is reminiscent of what we experienced with ‘Angry Birds’ at launch and what we have witnessed with (Microsoft’s) ‘Minecraft,’” says Mostman. “With its large fan base, billions of YouTube views, feature film in development and the first of three books recently launched, ‘Five Nights at Freddy’s’ is one of those rare properties with the benefit of being driven by multiple media executions and deeply active fan engagement.”

Licensees already signed on for the property’s merchandise program include Rubie’s Costume Co., NECA, Trends International, Buckle-Down, McFarlane Toys, Funko, Just Toys, Sanshee and Bioworld. Most recent additions to the licensing roster include Franco, Sunstaches, The Bridge Direct and Radz.

AMC’s “The Walking Dead” continues to be a strong property for Striker, and will continue to be supported at retail by licensees such as Aristocrat for slot machines, McFarlane for collectibles and Funko for figures.

It has also been finding a niche in location-based entertainment.

Universal Studios Hollywood has now made its once yearly walk-through “The Walking Dead” experience a permanent attraction, and additional themed horror night attractions are in place at theme parks around the world, says Striker.

“The Walking Dead,’ now in its seventh season, continues to perform at its best, and we’ve been

able to keep the licensing program without a dip throughout—not an easy task,” says Mostman. “Our 2016 should be just as big as 2015 for this property, which is rare for a show in its later seasons.”

Striker is currently developing a product program around the “The Walking Dead” spin-off, “Fear the Walking Dead,” also from AMC, and is also taking on the new series “Preacher” from Sony Television. Other major TV programs for the company include “Teen Wolf,” “The Shannara Chronicles,” “Orphan Black,” “Powers” and “House of Cards.”

On the theatrical side, Striker is deep into planning for upcoming films *Valerian and the City of a Thousand Planets*, *Ghost in the Shell* and the Steven Spielberg-directed *The B.F.G.*

Striker also continues to represent for licensing the mobile gaming brand “Candy Crush Saga” from King and the upcoming mobile game “Creature Quest” from VC Mobile Entertainment.

Striker is taking a departure from its typical property genre and taking on Exploding Kittens, a card game best known for being one of the most successfully funded Kickstarter campaigns ever.

“The creative minds behind projects always inspire us,” says Binder. “There are a lot of video games, TV shows and films made, but there are only a few

special content creators, storytellers, filmmakers and video game creators that have that magic. Marc and I love this business, and we love it because of the folks we work with—from the manufacturing community to entertainment. It’s very validating to know that people like to see us succeed and are rooting for us.” ©





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# 10 YouTube CREATORS TO WATCH



**T**his exclusive report profiles 10 of the hottest new creators on YouTube who each provide a unique message and content across various categories including entertainment, technology, food and beauty. And they could be the next big names in licensing. Check out the list and start watching!

### **Lauren Riihimaki (LaurDIY)**

Lauren Riihimaki, better known as LaurDIY, is a lifestyle YouTuber and DIY guru. She makes weekly inspirational and aspirational videos for her 3 million fans on YouTube.

Riihimaki started her channel while studying at Ryerson University in Toronto. Since graduating, Riihimaki has moved to Los Angeles, Calif., traveled to Tokyo in support of a Disney brand deal, performed on the FanFest Toronto stage and partnered with cosmetics company Smashbox during its Coachella activations.

Riihimaki is also collaborative and has worked with brands such as Starbucks, P&G, Etsy, Duck Tape, MTV, *Seventeen* magazine and many others.

Riihimaki currently has 1.3 million Instagram followers, more than 390,000 Twitter followers and 297,000 Facebook fans.



### **Lewis Hilsenteger (UnboxTherapy)**

Lewis Hilsenteger started his YouTube channel as any techie would—because of his passion for technology and product. Now, Hilsenteger creates videos featuring some of the most innovative and cutting-edge products, from headphones to gold-plated Nintendo gaming systems.

He loves uncovering the coolest products for his fans and makes technology and accessible and fun for all.

According to YouTube, Hilsenteger is the No. 1 tech creator on the platform (he has 4.2 million followers) and has worked with brands such as Samsung, HP, Google, Android, Pizza Hut, Best Buy, Ford and many more.

Other stats: 447,000 Instagram followers, 846,000 Twitter followers and 178,000 Facebook fans.





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### Byron Talbott

Byron Talbott is a classically trained chef who has worked under famed chefs Thomas Keller and Gordon Ramsay. And now he counts his 1.1 million YouTube followers among his accomplishments.

Funny enough, Talbott met his wife Rachel Talbott (also a top YouTube talent) at a cooking class.

Talbott has 92,000 Instagram followers, 17,000 Twitter followers and 39,000 Facebook fans.



### Anna Akana

Anna Akana started her YouTube channel in 2011, jumpstarting her career as an actress, producer, filmmaker and writer.

In 2013, Akana wrote and starred in the animated series “Riley Rewind,” which garnered more than 25 million views across YouTube, Facebook (where she has 443,000 fans) and Netflix.

Now with 1.3 million-plus YouTube subscribers (along with 252,000 Instagram followers and 113,000 Twitter followers), Akana produces one short film a month for her channel in addition to her weekly YouTube show, which features semi-autobiographical comedic stories where she portrays multiple roles.

As a screen actress, Akana can also recently be seen in recurring roles on terrestrial TV networks such as Freeform’s “The Fosters” and Comedy Central’s “Broken People,” as well as in the films *Kids vs. Monsters*, *Hello, My Name is Doris* and *Ant Man*.



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### **Lilly Singh (ISuperwomanII)**

Lilly Singh (aka ISuperwomanII) is a multi-talented entertainer and YouTube superstar who brings a message of positivity to her global audience.

Singh has found worldwide fame through her comedic and inspirational videos, amassing nearly 8 million subscribers across her YouTube channels and more than 1 billion lifetime video views.

Singh's distinct style of observational comedy and talent for creating characters, such as those inspired by her Punjabi parents, have led her to produce various viral hits such as "How Girls Get Ready," "Types of Kids at School" and "Rules of Racism."

In addition to making *Forbes'* 2016 30 Under 30 Hollywood & Entertainment list, Singh has appeared on "The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon" and has been featured in *Entertainment Weekly*, *People*, *Seventeen*, *Vogue India*, *The Wall Street Journal* and *The New York Times*, among others. She has collaborated with brands including Bobbi Brown, Dell and Coca-Cola and has 3.5 million Instagram followers, 1.3 million Twitter followers and 2.8 million Facebook fans.



### **Jesse and Jeana (Prank vs. Prank)**

Prank vs. Prank is the most popular prank channel on YouTube.

Consisting of Jesse and Jeana, a real-life couple who upload bi-weekly videos of themselves pranking one another, the channel has amassed 10 million subscribers and more than 2 billion views. The two started uploading in 2007, when a cinnamon challenge video went viral. They later formed a vlog channel, BFvsGF, where they film their daily lives. That channel has since reached more than 8 million subscribers. Additionally, Jesse's video for "Cookie Dance" as his rapper alter-ego, Chip Chocolate, has almost 13 million views and the song placed on the iTunes chart.

Jesse and Jeana have been featured on TV shows such as "Extra" and "20/20." They recently won the 2015 Streamy Award for Best Prank Series. They has also just released their first YouTube Red original series, "Prank Academy." Other statistics: 3.3 million Instagram followers, 2 million Twitter followers and 2.6 million Facebook fans.



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### **Grayson and Ethan Dolan (The Dolan Twins)**

Grayson and Ethan Dolan are two of the most popular teenage boys in the world, says YouTube.

With more than 19 million fans between them, some of the highest engagement across social media (1.4 million subscribers on YouTube, 5.6 million Instagram followers, 2.5 million Twitter followers and 669,000 Facebook fans) and a penchant for comedic, yet relatable skits about teen life, these 15-year-old creators with model-like good looks are some of the hottest talent around right now.

Fun fact: after dropping a new video on their YouTube channel, The Dolan Twins trended four times as high as HBO's "Game of Thrones" on the same day that the series' trailer dropped, according to YouTube.



### **Amanda Steele (MakeupByMandy24)**

Since making her debut on YouTube six years ago, Steele has amassed more than 2.8 million subscribers on YouTube and over 6.5 million across her social media platforms (2.7 million on Instagram, 821,000 on Twitter and 328,000 on Facebook).

She has co-hosted an online show called "Polished;" has taken part in various beauty panels across the country; and has worked with several fashion-forward and well-known brands, both in the U.S. and abroad, such as Brandy Melville and Quay (Australia). Steele also tapped deeper into her love and passion for beauty as she worked with BH Cosmetics to create her own exclusive eyeshadow palette.

Elevating her fashion credibility, Steele collaborated with fashion icon Iris Apfel for a Spring Outfit of the Week (OOTW) campaign, launched her first line of limited edition sunglasses with Quay and has claimed her spot on the front lines at some of the most coveted shows during New York Fashion Week and now Paris Fashion Week.

Last summer, she also released her docu-series with AwesomenessTV, "The Social Life," which followed events that led up to her sweet sixteen, and starred in the series "Guidance" opposite actress Michelle Trachtenberg.

Steele has been featured in magazines such as *Allure*, *Seventeen*, *Teen Vogue*, *Harper's Bazaar* and *Byrdie* to name a few, and in 2015 was nominated for a Streamy award in the fashion category. Steele is currently signed with WME and IMG Models.





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### **Rob Czar and Corinne Leigh (ThreadBanger)**

Threadbanger was a part of the Google Lab Channels initiative on the YouTube platform until November 2015. Over the course of 2015, they saw incredible growth on their channel, growing by almost 2 million subscribers. (Now the duo is up to 2.4 million YouTube subscribers, 85,000 followers on Instagram, 126,000 followers on Twitter and 49,000 fans on Facebook.)

Their edgy take on DIY content has resonated with audiences and allowed them to tap into a larger male demographic than a typical DIY creator. Their series “Man vs. Pin” has been very successful, allowing Czar and Leigh to recently sign with Additional Management and WME to explore expanding their business to tours, books, merchandise and more.



### **Casey Neistat**

Casey Neistat is a YouTube creator, producer, director and co-founder of the social media company Beme. In 2008, HBO bought the series Neistat created with his brother, “The Neistat Brothers,” which launched him into the public eye.

He began daily vlogging last year, and recently posted his 500th YouTube video.

Neistat is renowned in Hollywood for his filmmaking, business sense and creative work with brands, says YouTube, and has worked with brands such as Nike, J. Crew and Mercedes. Other stats: 980,000 Instagram followers, 478,000 Twitter followers and 360,000 Facebook followers. ©



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# RIDE ON

From movie franchises to video games, television series and more, entertainment companies are tapping into theme parks to leverage their IP, enhance brand awareness and connect with consumers in a completely new, innovative way.

by ERICA GARBER

Even though theme parks have been around for decades (think Disneyland, Universal Studios and Six Flags), recent years have seen an influx of entertainment companies such as Warner Bros., Nickelodeon, Cartoon Network and Twentieth Century Fox, just to name a few, tap into theme park operators around the world to create brand-new themed destinations.





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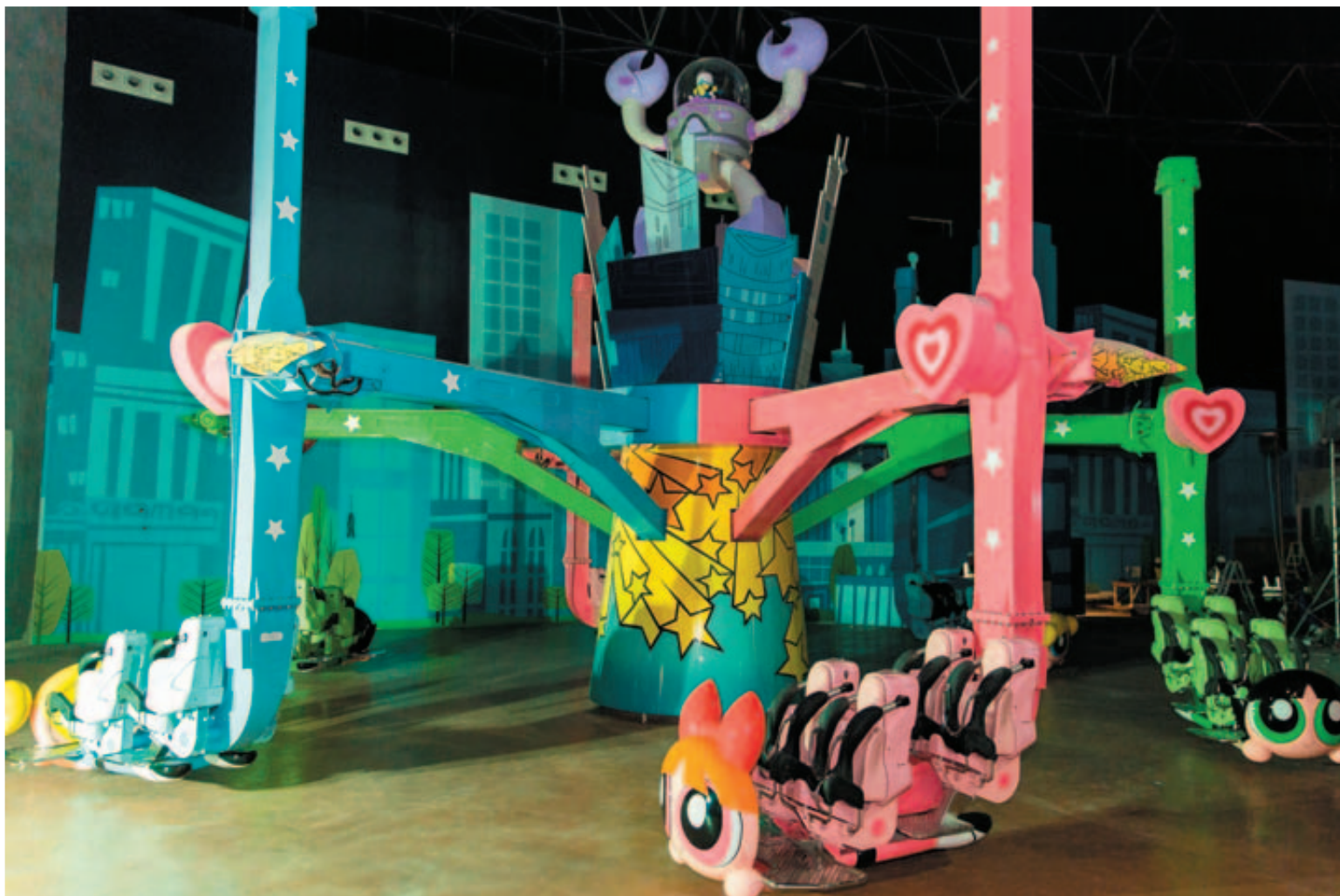
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These theme parks aren't just licensing in entertainment companies' top brands, they're creating a touch point with consumers that will offer both value and, in some cases, the latest information about the brand. It's licensing in a whole new way.

In the modern era, consumers (particularly Millennials) are demanding to be part of a brand's DNA in ways that were unimaginable several years ago. In response, licensors are developing 360-degree strategies to bring fans of all ages together to experience some of the most exciting aspects of their IP in completely immersive environments.

Unlike other entertainment activations such as touring live shows, in-store events, social media campaigns and other fan engagements, theme parks are branded extensions that allow companies to target their fans year around. Meaning that, when there is less news surrounding a particular brand, fans can continue to show both their loyalty and support while also creating

lasting memories that could potentially drive the brand to become a long-standing franchise such as *Harry Potter* has done with its recent attractions at Universal Studios.

However, despite the success of the *Harry Potter* attractions, as well as The Walt Disney Company's plans for *Star Wars*, *Frozen* and *Toy Story* zones within their parks, many of the recently-opened or newly-announced theme parks that are making waves are in international waters and attracting fans outside of the U.S., truly creating a global phenomenon.

So, while licensors are developing new alternative forms of entertainment to interact with their fans on a whole new level, these theme parks will be rolling out over the next several years and are sure to create a lasting impression among the biggest, most loyal fans.

### The Middle East

The Middle East, in particular Dubai, has been a





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driving force behind new branded theme parks for several years now, bringing in top companies such as Warner Bros., Fox, Cartoon Network and Lionsgate.

In recent months, the region has scored several major partnerships for not only theme parks but also entire themed resort destinations that will include hotels and more.

Most recently, Warner Bros. partnered with Miral to create a themed destination in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. Located on Yas Island, Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi will include a theme park, as well as the only Warner Bros.-branded hotel in the world.

The studio plans to use the theme park destination to bring together its portfolio of DC Comics superheroes including Batman, Superman and Wonder Woman, as well as its iconic cartoons such as “Looney Tunes,” “Scooby-Doo” and “Tom and Jerry.” The themed destination will also give guests the opportunity to step inside Gotham City and Metropolis and experience the cartoon worlds of Hanna-Barbera.

Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi is slated to open in 2018, with the branded hotel will open at a later date.

Meanwhile Cartoon Network recently revealed plans to open a Cartoon Network Zone at the IMG Worlds of Adventures this August, also in Dubai. The partnership between Cartoon Network and IMG will see series “Ben 10,” “Adventure Time,” “The Powerpuff Girls” and “The Amazing World of Gumball” brought to life through interactive rides and entertainment.

In addition to the rides and entertainment, the Cartoon Network Zone will also feature a range of branded restaurants and retail locations including the world’s largest “Ben 10” retail store, proving that consumers are not only eager to participate in these experiences and events, but are also eager to purchase products.

Twentieth Century Fox Consumer Products has tapped the Al Ahli Holding Group to develop a Fox-branded theme park and resort in Dubai. The new theme park will be the second Twentieth Century Fox World (the first is in Malaysia) and will also include the first-ever Fox-branded resort, featuring themed rooms and dining opportunities.

Twentieth Century Fox World Dubai will include an array of attractions and retail outlets inspired by the studio’s franchises including *Ice Age*, *Rio*, *Planet of the Apes*, *Aliens*, *Predator*, *Titanic* and “The Simpsons,” among others. The theme park is slated to open in 2018.

The deal with AAHG also allows for the development of up to three additional Fox-branded resorts outside of Dubai, although none have been announced yet.

Finally, Lionsgate partnered with Dubai Parks and Resorts to bring a studio-themed zone to the Motiongate Dubai Theme Park, which will open this October.

The branded-entertainment zone will feature attractions and a retail outlet inspired by *The Hunger Games* franchise. It will also include a live stage show based on *Step Up: All In* and *Step Up: Revolution*, the two most recent films in the *Step Up* franchise.





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## Asia

The Middle East isn't the only big player in the theme park business. In recent years, multiple theme park operators across various countries in Asia (particularly in China, Japan and Malaysia) have taken on Disney, Nickelodeon and more to help expand their brands in the ever-growing Asian marketplace.

The Walt Disney Company has partnered with the Shanghai Shendi Group for the Shanghai Disney Resort in China. The new Disney resort will open this month and is Disney's first destination resort in Mainland China.

The park, which has been in the making for the past 15 years, will feature classic Disney storytelling and characters with new experiences specifically tailored for the citizens of China. In its opening month, the new resort will include six themed lands—Adventure Isle, Gardens of Imagination, Mickey Avenue, Tomorrowland, Treasure Cove and Fantasy Land—as well as the Shanghai Disneyland Hotel and *Toy Story* Hotel.

The new resort will even feature an international shopping, dining and entertainment district adjacent to Shanghai Disneyland.

Viacom International Media Networks has partnered with several companies to open two Nickelodeon theme parks in both China and Malaysia.

First, the company tapped the Sanshui New Town Management Committee and Elite Global Group to develop the first Nickelodeon-branded attraction in China.

Nickelodeon hasn't released many details about the new theme park, but it will include a cultural zone, the Foshan Cultural and Ecological Coastal Project, and is expected to open by 2020. It will also join Nickelodeon's lineup of branded attractions and parks around the world in countries including Australia, the U.K., Germany, Spain and more.

However, Nickelodeon's trek into Asia doesn't stop in China. The entertainment network also partnered with Sunway to open the Nickelodeon Lost Lagoon at Sunway Lagoon in Malaysia.

This new theme park boasts more than 14 attractions and features Nickelodeon's top properties including "SpongeBob SquarePants" and "Dora the Explorer." It also features interactive play areas, water slides, games, retail shops, a multitude of food service establishments and more.

Also in Malaysia, Ubisoft is currently developing a theme park in the region to feature its portfolio of world-renowned gaming brands.



The project is being led by Ubisoft Motion Pictures in partnership with RSG, co-owner and co-developer of Movie Animation Park Studios. The 10,000-square-meter park will feature rides, attractions and shows based on Ubisoft's biggest franchises like "Assassin's Creed," "Just Dance" and "Rabbids."

The Ubisoft theme park is currently slated to open in 2020.

Finally, a new theme park inspired by Moomin is slated to open in Japan next year.

The park will be financed by the Japanese investment banking company FinTech Global and will consist of two zones—a public zone that will feature a free-to-enter park, and a Moomin zone, where visitors can enjoy the world of the Moomins through exhibitions and attractions.

## Europe and the U.S.

Beyond the Middle East and Asia, other territories in the world are continuing to be popular destinations for theme parks, especially Europe and the U.S.

In Europe, Aardman Animations partnered with Skånes Djurpark animal park in Sweden to launch the first international "Shaun the Sheep" family attraction.

The family attraction combines the park's six values—play, learn, share, explore, magic and excitement—to allow consumers to see, feel and experience the world of "Shaun the Sheep." Shaun the Sheep Land is slated to open this summer.

Also in Europe, Ferrari tapped the PortAventura Resort in Salou, Spain, for a new Ferrari Land theme park.

Ferrari Land is expected to cover an area of more than 800,000-square-feet and will feature a slate of attractions based on the classic car brand



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and its iconic Prancing Horse logo. The new theme park will join Ferrari's other branded theme park in Abu Dhabi and is slated to open later this year.

In the U.S., HIT Entertainment has brought "Thomas and Friends" and the Island of Sodor to life at the Thomas Land theme park in Edaville USA, a family amusement park and heritage railroad located in Massachusetts.

The new "Thomas" attraction boasts 11 rides based on the franchise and its locations and characters. It also includes a 20-minute long train ride on a life-sized Thomas the Tank Engine, a roller coaster, drop tower, Ferris wheel, soft-play area and more. The branded attraction opened last fall.

Warner Bros. Consumer Products also tapped long-time partner Six Flags to unveil a new 4D interactive ride, Justice League: Battle for Metropolis, at Six Flags Great America in Illinois.

In the ride, guests will become members of the Justice

League Reserve Team and will battle alongside Superman, Batman, Wonder Woman and Green Lantern, among other heroes, in six-passenger vehicles to save the city of Metropolis from Lex Luthor.

WBCP has also unveiled the world's first "DC Super Friends"-themed area at Six Flags Over Georgia. The "DC Super Friends" zone will feature five new rides and gaming attractions including the Superman Tower of Power, The Batcopters, Wonder Woman Flight School, Harley Quinn Games and The Joker Funhouse coaster.

Also from the Warner portfolio, and more than five years in the making, Universal Studios Hollywood recently opened The

Wizards World of Harry Potter in April.

The new *Harry Potter*-themed destination (the first is located at Universal Studios Orlando in Florida) features re-created locations from the films such as Hogwarts, Hogsmeade, Honeydukes, Ollivanders, Zonko's Joke Shop and many more.

The relatively new attraction also hosts rides such as "Flight of the Hippogriff" and "Harry Potter and the Forbidden Journey," which made its U.S. debut at the park.

Finally, despite not being a new theme park, The Walt Disney Company will roll out several new attractions and experiences based on its most popular franchises at all four Walt Disney World theme parks, among others, this summer.

Several new experiences at the iconic theme park destination include the "Turtle Talk with Crush" experience where Crush and other characters from *Finding Dory* will swim up to the "human tank" to talk with guests;

and the new Frozen Ever After boat ride, which will allow guests to sail into Epcot's Norway Pavilion to visit Elsa, Anna and other characters from the film in Elsa's ice palace. It will also feature music from *Frozen*.

With similar new deals likely on the horizon, it appears major theme park and entertainment initiatives will continue to be a driving force worldwide as companies continue to expand their top-performing franchises. Most importantly, these licensors are creating new forms of consumer engagement that will extend their brands into fans' hearts more than a traditional consumer product line alone could. ©





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**PROMINENT**

BRAND + TALENT

# TOP BRANDS GO LIVE

Entertainment companies are expanding their brands and giving classic franchises new life through live experiences.

by ERICA GARBER



With entertainment brands such as “Maya the Bee,” “Star Trek,” *Ghostbusters* and more consistently expanding beyond TV and film to categories like apparel, toys, homewares and publishing, entertainment companies have increasingly focused energy on reaching and connecting with fans in a new way: via live experiences.

Not only do live experiences enable fans to interact in real life with the brands they love, but live events also allow companies to market and retail licensed merchandise to a dedicated audience.

## Taking the Stage

Branded live shows and musicals have been around for decades, however there has been a recent surge of live shows surrounding popular preschool and children’s brands such as “Peppa Pig” and “Paw Patrol,” among others. As these shows continue to be popular with fans, the tours have even been adding additional locations and dates to meet ticket demand.

Nickelodeon has been in the game of live experiences for years, giving both classic franchises (such as “SpongeBob SquarePants”) and new properties extended life. In April, the company teamed with VStar Entertainment Group to create preschool series “Paw Patrol’s” first-ever live stage show, “Paw Patrol Live!: Race to the Rescue.” The show will debut in October and will visit more than 90 cities across the U.S., Canada and Mexico.

And Nickelodeon doesn’t stop there. The company, in partnership with Life Like Touring, has continually added new show dates for “Dora’s Pirate Adventure,” based on its “Dora the Explorer” franchise, in countries throughout the world such as South Africa, the United Arab Emirates and more.

However, Nickelodeon isn’t alone in the live experience category, particularly in international markets.

In January, “Peppa Pig’s Big Splash,” based on Entertainment One’s preschool property “Peppa Pig,” kicked off the first part of its U.S. tour and, as of January, have already sold 150,000 tickets, with multiple sell-outs across the country and with additional tour dates to be announced.

Other top companies are also working to create new live shows for their properties, both in the U.S. and internationally.

FremantleMedia partnered with Haven Holiday Parks to launch a 30-minute show based on the animated series “Tree Fu Tom,” which will run through August at 34 Haven Holiday Park locations in the U.K.

Aardman Animation also partnered with Haven Holiday Parks to launch a 34-date tour between May and July for the first “Shaun the Sheep” puppet show. SGA Productions, which will produce the show, is also creating an interactive “Shaun the Sheep” live experience at the Haven Holiday Park in Yorkshire, England.

Meanwhile, Silvergate Media partnered



with Red Light Management and Fiery Light in April to launch the “Octonauts” first-ever stage show in the U.S. “The Octonauts and the Deep Sea Volcano Adventure” will visit 60 cities across the country, as well as offer meet-and-greet ticket packages, furthering extending the brand’s relationship with its fans.

Beyond preschool and children’s properties, actor Channing Tatum is proving that non-animated films can also benefit from live experiences.

In May, Tatum partnered with the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas, Nev., to launch a live show based on the film franchise *Magic Mike*, which is set to hit the stage next year.



projected to open next year.

Additionally, Viacom International Media Networks tapped leisure park operator Parques Reunidos to bring Nickelodeon Family entertainment centers to the European region next year. The entertainment centers will offer interactive activities, an adventure zone, character meet-and-greets and Nickelodeon-themed rooms for parties. The space also goes beyond live experiences with a dedicated food and beverage area and a Nickelodeon retail space.

Looking to China, other companies have started to expand their brands into the activity centers space. For example, Paws, Inc., the licensor of the iconic fat cat Garfield, tapped MCM

### More Than Meets the Eye

Stage shows aren’t the only live experiences that companies have utilized to bring their properties to the next level. Other attractions, such as museum exhibits, traveling exhibitions, cruises, family centers and more have also increased in recent years, providing permanent and limited time events for fans.

One of the most well known novelty museums, Madame Tussauds, has partnered with Sony Pictures, Ghost Corps and The Void to create an immersive, virtual reality experience in New York City based on Sony’s new *Ghostbusters* movie. In addition to the traditional wax figures Madame Tussauds is famous for, the experience will combine technology, authentic props, costumes, a vehicle, gadgets and exclusive content to bring the classic property to life.

Meanwhile, Madame Tussauds also partnered with Rovio Entertainment to develop, produce and digitally bring *Angry Birds* to life at its London location, which debuted ahead of the new film’s theatrical release, May 13, in the U.K.

Another U.K. museum, Sea Life London Aquarium, will feature BBC Earth’s natural history series “Frozen Planet” in the permanent attraction “Frozen Planet: Face to Face,” allowing fans to step into the television series in a fully immersive experience that utilizes scent, sound and visual effects.

Moving away from museums, companies have looked to expand their brands in Europe with permanent attractions at family centers and playgrounds.

In Europe, Studio 100 International teamed with grocery retailer Lidl to create “Maya the Bee”-inspired playgrounds in Slovakia. The two companies plan to open 10 themed playgrounds this year, with more

Group to develop a series of Garfield-themed children’s education and activity centers in China, each boasting approximately 2,000- to 3,000-square-meters of space that features a range of entertainment experiences.

However, less permanent live experiences have also proven popular for top brands.

For example, NASCAR partnered with Entertainment Cruise Productions to create the first NASCAR-themed cruise, complete with NASCAR celebrities, virtual racing simulators, pit crew challenges, autograph opportunities, Q&A sessions and more.

In January, CBS Consumer Products and Paramount Pictures teamed with CineConcerts to develop “Star Trek: The Ultimate Voyage,” a North American concert tour. The production features a live symphony orchestra playing the franchise’s biggest hits against a backdrop of “Star Trek” TV and film footage.

Last December, Universal Partnerships and Licensing teamed with Imagine Exhibitions to create a global touring exhibit—“Jurassic World: The Exhibition” based on the hit film. The touring live experience allows fans to connect with life-size animatronic dinosaurs and more.

As new experiences continue to emerge for these top brands, live shows, family centers, museum exhibits, cruises and more will only continue to expand brands to new places within fans’ hearts. ©



WE SEE A  
**Golden**  
**Anniversary**  
LOOKING AT US

Classic children's book *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* is celebrating 50 years, and the Joester Loria Group is planning an extensive product program and promotion schedule to commemorate the event. **by BARBARA SAX**

**T**he Joester Loria Group, the exclusive global licensing agent for The World of Eric Carle, is collaborating with Macmillan Children's Publishing on a year-long celebration of the 50th anniversary of Carle's classic children's book *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* with new titles, a retail and merchandising program based on a new style guide inspired by the book collection and a number of fun, family friendly activities and promotions.

*Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* is Carle's first children's title, and the publishing franchise it has spawned has sold more than 132 million books to-date. Nearly 50 years and more than 75 titles later, Carle's books have become a staple in schools, libraries and homes around the world for three-plus generations that is beloved by parents, caregivers, educators and children.

Carle's other bear-focused titles, *Polar Bear, Polar Bear, What Do You Hear?*; *Baby Bear, Baby Bear, What Do You See?*; and *Panda Bear, Panda Bear, What Do You See?* have given generations of children an introduction to the zoo and endangered animals long before it was a buzz topic.



"Eric Carle was a nature lover from early childhood and encouraged exploration and understanding of the natural world in his work long before it was a popular theme," says Debra Joester, president, Joester Loria Group. "All four *Bear* books will be featured in the 50th anniversary campaign and in a new *Bear* style guide that is being applied to a number of categories, including apparel."

The anniversary initiative will be a 2017 overlay to the Eric Carle global licensing program sold in more than 30,000 doors and with over 135 licensees. The anniversary kicks off this fall and will be a year-long multi-platform marketing campaign that includes a dedicated #SharetheBear50 social media campaign. *Brown Bear* 50th anniversary events and promotions are also planned and will be supported by regional



**DEBRA JOESTER**  
president, Joester Loria Group



partners such as New York City's Department of Parks and Recreation which includes the Bronx Zoo, Prospect Park, the Staten Island Zoo, the Brooklyn Aquarium and the Central Park Zoo. The events will reflect the themes of the four *Bear* books, as will other events, activities and product giveaways planned to take place at 15 U.S. national parks. A downloadable 50th anniversary activity kit will be also available on partners' consumer websites.

In the publishing arena, Macmillan will launch five new anniversary edition book titles, a large board book with a padded cover, a lift-the-tab board book, a gift set of four board books, a *Little Bear* library and a mini-tab *Baby Bear* board book. Macmillan will support the launch with dedicated national media advertising campaigns and retail support.

"Macmillan has an ambitious program to promote the existing titles and to publish new books," says Joester. "They have been a terrific partner."

Key retailers supporting the anniversary program include Target, Costco and Barnes & Noble, and will provide retail platforms for the *Bear* books and related anniversary product. Licensees including Jaxxware, Intimo, Kids Preferred, University Games, Oriental Trading, Chronicle and others have related product in stores and are currently previewing new collections for 2017.

*Brown Bear* will also have high-profile, in-school support with curriculum programs, National Teacher and Librarian Conference 50th anniversary promotions, a #SharetheBear50 teachers' and librarians' sweepstakes and 50th anniversary posters in Scholastic Teachers' club boxes.

In 2017, *Brown Bear* will be added to "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" live show, which successfully launched in New York City earlier this year and was the only children's show nominated for a Drama Desk Award. The show debuted in Australia in 2015 and begins touring the U.K. later this year.

Further interest will be generated by a touring exhibit and events from the Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art and the Mandarin Oriental SleepTime Program for Families in locations throughout the U.S. A non-profit partnership will be announced later this year.

Simultaneously, the Joester Loria Group is focusing

on expanding apparel and accessory categories for the Eric Carle program. Apparel has long been the top selling category for the property in Japan, the U.K., Australia and Germany. In 2014, The World of Eric Carle partnered with children's retailer Gymboree for a collaboration that included infant and toddler layette, playwear and sleepwear.

"The collection was the first third-party brand licensed by Gymboree for sale in its stores, and the campaign from the products sold beyond expectations. It was featured in store windows and created social media buzz—it was a huge success for both Gymboree and the Eric Carle brand," says Joester.

Currently, infant apparel licensee Jaxxwear is expanding its high-end collection on Pima cotton onesies and layette, which is currently sold in retailer Nordstrom and at specialty stores in the U.S.

Licensee Intimo has a toddler sleepwear collection that is currently sold in retailers BuyBuy Baby, Nordstrom Rack and other better off-price accounts, as well as online at Target.com and on Zulily flash sales. Joester says the brand is expanding its U.S. apparel program with a new partnership with Intimo for playwear launching in fall 2017.

The brand also continues to expand into new categories, including a line of natural children's health and beauty aid products from The Village Group that includes shampoo, body wash,

lotion and gift sets, which will launch in spring 2017.

Infant and toddler bedding collections from Wildkin are also in development.

"We have successful bedding collections in Australia, Germany, the U.K. and Japan—key markets where the brand is very strong—and are very excited to introduce infant and toddler bedding in the U.S. in 2017," says Joester.

Another new category for the brand is party paper goods from partner Oriental Trading.

"We launched a program of teaching supplies in 2015 and have followed with the 2016 launch of party and paper goods," says Joester. "Oriental Trading does a great job of creating a high-quality, beautifully designed product at very affordable prices.

"There is a lot of excitement about the 50th anniversary *Bear* program, and as we prepare to kick off that program, we are already beginning to plan for 2019 when *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* celebrates 50 years as one of the most successful children's titles," continues Joester. ©





ZAG  
HEROES  
Miraculous  
Tales of Ladybug & Cat Noir

# SWINGING INTO ACTION

Zag is hitting the global market with two new animated series and a broad licensed consumer product program. **by BARBARA SAX**

**Z**ag, a France-based entertainment company, has expanded its U.S. presence and is widening the reach of its two key properties—"Miraculous: Tales of Ladybug & Cat Noir" and "Zak Storm"—with new content, a lineup of licensees and some feature films on the horizon.

Co-founded in 2009 by Jeremy Zag and Jacqueline Tordjman, Zag has quickly expanded into a global enterprise with offices in Paris, Tokyo and California. Programming from Zag's television animation division, Zagtoon, which specializes in CGI-animated children's television programming, reaches more than 150 markets around the world.

Another dimension to Zag's business is Zag Animation Studios, a joint venture created in 2014 in partnership with producer Michael Barnathan and director Chris Columbus of 1492 Pictures (whose lengthy resume includes the production of such blockbuster films as *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, *Night at the Museum*, *Mrs. Doubtfire*, *Goonies*, *Gremlins* and many more). Zag Animation Studios develops

both animated and live action feature films.

"We've developed a business model built around high-quality CGI-animated features that tell stories about central, modern day superhero characters that are very relatable to today's kids and are viable on a global scale," says Andre Lake Mayer, president, Zag. "We're developing cutting-edge film and television for the global marketplace, while also being focused on providing digital content as an important aspect as part of our integrated marketing approach. Short-form content enhances television viewing and gives us a chance to offer kids a multi-platform approach to connecting with these characters."

To develop such content, Zag works closely with the Man of Action writing team, best known for their creation of the *Ben 10* and the first *Big Hero 6* comic books.

Under its Zag Heroez umbrella brand, which includes characters from the company's latest series as well as other new characters that will be



**ANDRE LAKE MAYER**  
president, Zag



introduced by Zag Animation Studios, the company currently has eight television properties and three movies in various stages of development.

“We’re focused on merchandisable franchises that can last for years,” says Mayer. “Zag develops a multi-platform strategy that includes television and feature films, and thinks in terms of building global franchises that extend the story through publishing, gaming, toys and digital content.”

Zag’s two key properties are the animated TV series “Miraculous: Tales of Ladybug & Cat Noir” and “Zac Storm.”

“Miraculous” follows the adventures of Marinette, an average, sometimes awkward, teenage girl living in Paris who has a big crush on the cute boy at school and a big dream of becoming a fashion designer. Marinette’s secret is her ability to magically transform into the vivacious crime-fighting superhero Ladybug with the help of a Kwami, a tiny magical assistant named Tikki, and her “miraculous” magical accessory earrings. Tikki uses the miraculous magical accessory earrings to transform Marinette, but her Ladybug super powers only work for a limited time. Marinette also has a superhero partner, Cat Noir, whose true identity (unbeknownst to her) is her school crush Adrien.

The 26-episode series is broadcast in more than 120 markets worldwide, including on the Disney Channel in Europe and Latin America, and launched in the U.S. on Nickelodeon in December 2015. According to Zag, ratings for “Miraculous” have been notably high, with the series holding the No. 1 programming slot for kids ages 4 to 14 in France, Brazil and Korea, and the No. 1 time slot with girls ages 4 to 14 in France, the U.K., the U.S. and Norway. Social media rankings for this brand are also high on Nickelodeon platforms, and recently the series claimed the No. 1 position on Tumblr. Mayer says the series has an active global fan base and pop culture audience that enjoys a balanced boy/girl gender split in most markets, but also draws brand awareness through its social media presence.

“Fans engage on Facebook and through cosplay and blogging about episodes,” she says.

Thirteen new TV episodes are currently in production, and season two and three of the TV series have been greenlit. Also in the works is a DVD.

“We’ve partnered with Shout Factory for the first edition of seven episodes from season one for a DVD, which was released in April. The second edition of six episodes will hit stores in August,” says Mayer.

In addition to the series’ TV component, 20 webisodes are now rolling out online along with music videos that emphasize “Miraculous” theme song and characters.

Zag’s approach to licensing is to allow the franchise to incubate for 9 to 18 months in each market before rolling out products, says the company. With that timing in mind, “Miraculous” is now ready to hit the retail market with

45 licensees and 18 licensing agents on board worldwide for more than 400 products in varying stages of development.

Master toy licensee Bandai is leading the program and will launch action and fashion dolls, role play, plush and more this fall in the U.S., Spain, Portugal, France, the U.K., Germany, Brazil and Korea, followed by an expansion into Latin America in 2017 and Asia in 2018. Zag plans a significant push for the back-to-school season across multiple categories including toys, books, fashion and lifestyle.

Other partners signed on to support the property in North America include Action Lab Entertainment for trading card games, comics and graphic novels; master apparel licensee Evy of California; Komar Kids for sleepwear; H.E.R Accessories for fashion accessories; My Locker for adult t-shirts; Rubie’s Costume Co. for costumes; and Franco Manufacturing for bedding, bath and beach towels. Target, Toys ‘R’ Us, Kohl’s, Costco and Walmart are among the retailers that have agreed to stock the brand.

“We are building the program in 2016, and each year we will continue to launch new products so that we can have true traction at retail by growing our audience and expanding our retail presence globally,” says Mayer.

Zag plans the same approach for its other major property “Zac Storm,” an animated TV series that centers on the adventures of a young teen surfer swept into the Bermuda Triangle. Once inside the Triangle, Zak partners up with a magical sword, Calabross, that allows him to transform into a swashbuckling, renegade hero ready to fight the perils of the mysterious seas and the villain Skullivar. His crew includes an Atlantean princess first mate, a thick-headed and heavy-fisted Viking, a neurotic space traveler and a poltergeist prankster kid.

The series currently airs in Italy, France, Spain, the U.K., and Germany. Bandai America has already signed as the master toy licensee, and Zag will be forming partnerships in all categories around the world.

As Zag did with “Miraculous,” the series will undergo an incubating period to raise brand awareness and will launch a multi-category consumer product program in 2017.

“The target market for consumer products will be boys ages 4 to 11, depending on the market,” says Mayer. ©



# Holidays

## ALL YEAR ROUND

Character Arts, brand manager for the two seasonal staples, Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer and Spookley the Square Pumpkin, is expanding both properties through new initiatives. by Barbara sax

**C**haracter Arts, the brand manager for holiday icons Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer and Spookley the Square Pumpkin, is spreading the franchises' core messaging through new positioning, content and platforms.

Character Arts exclusively manages the rights for the characters from the 1964 "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" television special.

Together with author Joe Troiano, the company is expanding the brand to include a new *T.E.A.M. Rudolph and the Reindeer Games* illustrated storybook, which is written in verse and reveals new story elements about Rudolph's North Pole, growing the legendary tale.

"In the 10 years that we have managed this property, we have not embellished the content of the classic 1964 special, but we realized that people really relate to the message, and we saw an opportunity," says Jonathan Flom, president, Character Arts. "We envisioned a first chapter of the new book as the story of how Santa conceives of The Reindeer Games

and uses them to find the original eight reindeer. "

Flom tapped Troiano, the author of *Spookley the Square Pumpkin*, to write *T.E.A.M. Rudolph* with an eye to the original special's characters and clues contained within that could be built upon for the book.

"We already know from the 1964 special that Comet is a coach and is Clarice's father and that Donner is Rudolph's father and one of Santa's lead reindeer," says Flom. "The book will reveal, among other things, that Blitzen is the father of Rudolph's friend Fireball and which two of Santa's eight original reindeer are female."

Flom and his team created a brand-new, three-chapter book, with two of those chapters acting as bookends to the classic Rudolph story from the 1964 special.

The first chapter sets up the premise for The Reindeer Games, which sees Santa inventing games that allow him to select the best reindeer for his team. In the second chapter, this elite team excludes Rudolph before they realize he too has something unique and important to offer, which is derivative of the classic story. The third chapter sets the stage for T.E.A.M. Rudolph and

positions The Reindeer Games as the official games of the North Pole, while stressing that they are open to everyone and are a celebration of uniqueness and diversity.

"T.E.A.M. Rudolph is actually an acronym for 'Treat Everyone as Members.' Everyone plays on the same team and competes against themselves,



**JONATHAN FLOM**  
president, Character Arts



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and the snowflake serves as the perfect metaphor for uniqueness and diversity,” says Flom.

The book will have a soft launch this holiday season exclusively through stage show, theme park and attraction venues where Rudolph is featured, including SeaWorld, Busch Gardens, Dollywood, Silver Dollar City, Gaylord Opryland and various museums and zoos where a new eight-minute Rudolph 4D film is also launching. The book will also be featured at Forest City malls, which has partnered with Rudolph for holiday appearances this year.

In 2017, the book will roll out for national retail distribution. Flom says a distribution partner is in the works, as is a toy partner for collectibles, plush and more.

“The book and merchandising program launch coincides with the marketing of the Winter Olympics, a nice parallel to our branding of The Reindeer Games as the

“Official Games of the North Pole,” says Flom. “Licensees can opt into the tie-in and create customized products and programs that incorporate this positive messaging.”

The Rudolph brand’s focus on celebrating diversity is right on target for today’s market, says Flom, and is a perfect fit with Character Arts’ other key brand, Spookley the Square Pumpkin. Spookley is a picture book in which round pumpkins tease Spookley because he is square. Spookley eventually saves the residents of the farm during a storm.

“Stories are a powerful learning tool, and we have a great opportunity to leverage the power of this multi-generational franchise to model positive behaviors for people of all ages,” says Flom.

Character Arts is making the most of the diversity message of both properties with a multi-platform program launching in fall 2016.

“The Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer: The Musical” stage show, which debuted in 2012, has annual multi-city tours. Elements from the new *T.E.A.M. Rudolph* book will likely be integrated into the show. This year, the “Spookley” and “Rudolph” stage shows will run back-to-back in Minneapolis, Minn., at Stages Theater Company, beginning in October under a Celebrating Diversity through the Holidays marketing umbrella.

There is also a philanthropical approach to the properties. A portion of the proceeds from the sale of *T.E.A.M. Rudolph* will be donated to the non-profit PACER’s National Bullying Prevention Center, which is based in Minneapolis.

“We’ve worked with PACER’s National Bullying Prevention Center since 2012 and Spookley is the official ‘Spokes-Pumpkin’ for National Bullying Prevention Month in October,” says Flom.

Spookley appears on educational materials teachers use in class and online to further support the diversity message.

Licensees Commonwealth Toy & Novelty and License 2 Play have signed on to further expand the Spookley brand with plush and book sets that will launch at Halloween in mass and specialty outlets; while the “Spookley the Square Pumpkin” animated special has a multi-year renewal from broadcaster Disney Junior.

“With the renewal in place, we can move forward on moving product into the market timed to the special,” says Flom.

Character Arts will seek other partnerships at this month’s Licensing Expo in Las Vegas, Nev.

“These brands offer retailers an opportunity to work with a single partner from back-to-school to Christmas, and offers iconic, timely holiday brands that will really resonate with consumers,” says Flom. ©



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# THE GLOBAL HOMERIZATION

Fox's 'The Simpsons' continues to grow around the world, creating new categories and new experiences in every major market.

by AMANDA CIOLETTI

Chances are if you've watched TV anytime since the '90s, you've watched "The Simpsons." Twentieth Century Fox's animated TV series is now 26-years-old and has spawned a cottage licensing industry around it—from apparel, bedding and party supplies to innovative theme park destinations, a beer brand and even a standalone brick-and-mortar.

According to Fox, more than 10,000 "The Simpsons"-branded products are available in 100,000 retailers around the world each year, which makes sense—the global brand awareness of the property is powerful. The series is on-air every minute of every day somewhere among the 180 countries it is broadcast in.

In the U.S. alone, the brand continues to grow with broadcast steady on the Fox network since the series' inception. And now with added syndication on the FX and FXX networks, the demographic is continually expanding.

"The Simpsons' is as relevant today as it has ever been.

One of the reasons is the writing and the storytelling and the way the series has adapted to the culture," says Peter Leeb, vice president, global brand management and strategy, Twentieth Century Fox Consumer Products. "It's not just an adult brand either—you have adults who have grown up with the brand and engage with it in many ways, but, as we've seen with broadcast on FX and FXX, the demographic is getting younger. We still have the 35- to 54-year-old viewer, but we now have younger audiences that are capturing 'The Simpsons' and engaging through non-linear platforms and through our different gaming mechanisms."

This broad and varied multi-platform engagement is precisely what keeps "The Simpsons'" momentum high, as is its appeal to men, women and teens.

The series has nearly 69 million fans on Facebook, making it the No. 3 largest global brand on the platform, just behind Coca-Cola and YouTube, says Fox.

The topical nature of the series has lent itself well to



**PETER LEEB**  
vice president, global brand  
management and strategy,  
Twentieth Century Fox  
Consumer Products





viral video content, touching on timely subjects such as the passing of David Bowie, the “Harlem Shake” dance phenomenon of 2013 and the incorporation of current event or pop culture references in the series’ opening credits.

It also has a mobile gaming component. Launched in 2012 in partnership with EA Games, the free-to-play game is available on iOS and Android platforms in more than 50 countries and, even four years since its release, continues to garner 5 million users per day.

This global powerhouse, then, offers Fox a lot to work with on the consumer product side, continually building out a program that has been in-market since the 1990s.

“The Simpsons’ is the most iconic TV show in history, so our focus from a partnership and marketing perspective is to not just look at 2016 and 2017, but to look to the next 25 years—the show isn’t going anywhere,” says Leeb. “It’s not really about the short term. It’s about igniting the long term.”

The brand has been making inroads across all merchandise categories, with high-end fashion partnerships (think Jeremy Scott, MAC cosmetics, Drop Dead, New Era and Colette), co-brand partnerships (such as YouTube, “Minecraft,” Apple, Visa, Coca-Cola and Burger King) and best-in-class toy partnerships with licensees like LEGO and Hasbro each contributing to continually elevating the brand.

“We are exploring a lot of the new technology and brands that are cutting through the advertising clutter—we are looking for new platforms that are hitting more critical mass,” says Leeb. “There is not a day that goes by that we are not talking with blue chip partners around the world to see who has the same global focus and sensibility as Fox and ‘The Simpsons.’”

Leeb says a big push for “The Simpsons” as of late has

been in emerging markets and opportunities for traditional and non-traditional approaches to these regions.

On May 5, the first-ever “The Simpsons” brick-and-mortar store opened in Beijing, China, in partnership with Chinese retailer Her-Chain. The store carries more than 125 curated products including exclusive apparel, bags, headwear and accessories.

“China is an area that the industry has started exploring more and more,” says Leeb. “Now that our content is distributed in China through Sohu, it’s a market we’re finding consumers gravitating toward more. Because of the new market, it’s a great test scenario to really understand the type of product and the types of styles that consumers like in the region.”

Leeb says that Fox will continue to explore a similar business model for other parts of the world.

In the emerging markets, core categories are apparel and accessories, but Leeb says the company, even after all these years in business with “The Simpsons,” is still creating and evolving its strategy.

“We’re still creating a baseline because there are still key markets that offer tremendous opportunity,” he says. “On the toy and hardline side, there is not a category we do not touch. Right now is about isolating all of the different demographics and regions and exploring the many ways we can go.

“We are actually penetrating every international market, whether through content that is distributed in more than 150 countries or our actual product line that can be found anywhere from Brazil, Argentina and Chile



## ALIEN DAY INVADES SOCIAL MEDIA

Twentieth Century Fox Consumer Products is not just about "The Simpsons," of course. On April 26, FCP celebrated Alien Day, a 24-hour, fan-focused social media event that shined a light on its 42-year-old *Alien* franchise, and the 30th anniversary of the second film in the series, *Aliens*.

"We wanted to create something that would celebrate the fans and the franchise because *Alien* is an important property for Fox—we've been making product for years and years around it, and it was important that we commemorate the portfolio of products and the licensees that Fox has," says Nicole Perez, vice president, global brand management and strategy, Twentieth Century Fox Consumer Products.

The one-day event featured a range of activations, nationwide screenings of the film and a range of new and exclusive consumer products.

Merchandise highlights from the event included Reebok's Alien Stomper shoe, a replica of the



shoes worn by character Ellen Ripley in the film; character figures from NECA; the expansion of the *Aliens* comic book series by Dark Horse Comics, as well as a deluxe hardcover edition; a brand-new novel, *Alien: Invasion (The Rage War Book 2)*, from Titan Books; and an audio drama from Audible, "Alien: Out of the Shadows."

Other partners that released products include Zen Studios, DC Entertainment, Fright Rags, The Upper Deck Company, Hot Toys and more.

"On Alien Day, we saw a lot of the items, including the Alien Stomper, the NECA items and the screenings, sell out. There was a strong demand on Alien Day, and we are still seeing that play through at retail now," says Perez. "We have had really strong success with this franchise overall at retail, and Alien Day definitely added to that success and brought even more awareness to all FCP merchandise."

According to FCP, there were more than 50,000 tweets for #AlienDay426 and #AlienDay, making the hashtags the top trending topics on Twitter. The term Alien Day also trended across other social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook.

in South America to the core countries of Germany, Italy, France, the U.K. and Spain throughout Europe—we have a strong presence in every country," Leeb says. "It is now about maintaining that presence and growing it."

Also crucial to the brand's global expansion is its location-based experiences.

The first "The Simpsons"-themed area, Springfield USA, opened in Universal Studios Orlando in 2013 and at the Hollywood park in 2015 and since has grown to include rides, carnival games and dining experiences derived from aspects of the series such as a Krusty Burger, Kwik-E-Mart Squishee or a Flaming Moe's at the Moe's Tavern. There's even a nuclear melt down, a popular theme from the series, which takes place every half-hour.

"Universal's expansion of its 'The Simpsons' ride into a total immersive zone within the park is a good indicator of things to come," says Leeb. "It's been an incredible experience to try and find new ways to immerse fans for the first time in things such as Krusty Burger, Moe's Tavern or a Duff brewery.



We've come out with Duff beer in different parts of the world now, so you can expect to see even more of these types of immersive opportunities to come."

As Fox continues to expand its theme park presence

around the world—20th Century Fox World is due to open next year in Malaysia and a theme park and branded resort is due open in 2018 in Dubai—"The Simpsons" will certainly factor into these location-based experiences, although no details are available at this time.

But one thing is for certain, as the series' demographic ages and builds families (and therefore younger and younger viewers) of their own, the audience will continue to expand, opening itself up to new consumers all of the time. In fact, on the horizon is a new baby and infant category that

Leeb says is in the initial stages of development.

In the end, the partnerships are only as strong as the brand, and "The Simpsons" is not showing signs of fatigue.

Says Leeb: "It's as good a time as ever to partner with this brand." ©





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# SOMETHING FOR everyone

Cartoon Network is taking on 2016 with a broad assortment of properties for boys, girls, tweens, teens and adults.

by AMANDA CIOLETTI

**W**ith more property diversity and a broader demographic appeal than ever before, Cartoon Network Enterprises is gearing up for a year of opportunity as it begins to showcase its growing portfolio of offbeat brands.

"2016 and heading into 2017 is the first time that Cartoon Network has had this robust of a portfolio," says Pete Yoder, vice president, consumer products, North America, Cartoon Network Enterprises. "In the past, we've been really strong with boys, but may not have hit older or female audiences, but now, with the variety and wide array of brands we have, we are able to hit multiple demographics."

And it is evident—there is truly a property to satisfy all types of consumers.

For girls, teens and women is "Powerpuff Girls," the animated series made famous in the 1990s, now reinvented

for modern audiences.

The series re-launched on Cartoon Network in April, bringing back Blossom, Bubbles and Buttercup for the all-new series.

To support the animation, CNE is bolstering the property with a wide range of products headlined by global master toy partner Spin Master, which, according to Yoder, will receive placement across all mass market retailers this fall.

More than 30 additional licensees round out the product program and span categories from Halloween costumes (Disguise) to bags (Accessory Innovations), fashion tops (Hybrid Jem), junior's and girls' apparel (Jerry Leigh) and mobile accessories (Sakar).

Komar is on board for girls' sleepwear, ABG Accessories for cold weather accessories and headwear, BBC International for footwear, Franco Manufacturing for bedding and bath and puzzles from Cardinal Industries, among many more.



**PETE YODER**  
vice president, consumer products, North America, Cartoon Network Enterprises





Collaborations are also a focus for the brand, as it lends itself well to a fashion point-of-view, says Yoder.

In September 2015, CNE teamed with high-end fashion house Moschino for a spring fashion collection designed by Jeremy Scott. The apparel collection, which included knit tops, skirts, dresses, swimwear, scarves, bags and accessories for women, debuted at Moschino's fashion show in Milan, and hit retail in January, ahead of the series' TV premiere.

For the specialty market, retailer Hot Topic also signed on for a collaboration with CNE for a seven-piece, limited edition line of dresses, tops and a skirt. The collection debuted in Hot Topic stores last month.

"Powerpuff Girls' is the first time that we've been able to reach the traditional girls' market of 4- to 11-year-olds, as well as target teens, tweens and young moms with product," says Yoder. "We're hoping to build an aspirational quality for girls with this brand."

A big push for CNE moving forward will also be for the series "Steven Universe." Created by Rebecca Sugar, "Steven Universe" follows the misadventures of Steven, the ultimate "little brother" to a team of magical guardians of humanity—the Crystal Gems—as they band together to save the universe.

The series premiered on Cartoon Network in November 2013, but now is beginning to be supported by more robust offerings at retail.

"We've seen a huge pick up for 'Steven Universe,'" says Yoder. "It's one of those brands that has always rated really well—there is such a rich mythology within the storytelling—but it just took a little longer for fans to really get to know the characters."

According to CNE, the series is a

top performer on the network, coming in as the top grossing series per episode, and will now be expanded with a consumer product program.

Twenty-five-plus licensees have been tapped to expand the brand to accessories (Accutime, Buckle-Down, Hot Properties and High IntenCity), apparel (Bioworld, Underboss and Mighty Fine), gaming (USAopoly), home décor (Surreal Entertainment and the Northwest Company), novelty toys (A&A Global Industries, Funko, Just Toys International, Phat Mojo, Toy Factor and Zag Toys), costumes (Rubie's Costume Co.) and more.

CNE will also leverage show creator Sugar for a publishing program with Penguin, and Boom! Studios will launch comic books and graphic novels.

The products will sit at mid-tier retailers and hit shelves in time for back-to-school, with stores such as Kohl's, J.C. Penney and Sears signed on for inventory. Yoder says the program will expand to mass retailers and reach further into the kids' demographic next year.

Also for boys and teens, "Adventure Time," now in its seventh season, continues to be a strong player in CNE's portfolio and is considered an evergreen brand. (The eighth season is scheduled to begin airing later this year.) "Adventure Time" remains a high priority for us," says Yoder. "It continues to do well in terms of key tent pole events and its consumer product program."

The series received an added boost of momentum timed to a special eight-part mini-series, "Adventure Time Stakes," for which special style guides and limited edition products were released.

CNE says that they are planning another mini-series tent pole, "Card Wars 2," this summer, which will build on a 2012 episode from the series as well as the "Card Wars" app that launched in 2015.

"We're building that story and launching another app with the mini-series, as well as a considerably-sized consumer product program that will include apparel, publishing and a physical card game."



As part of the “Card Wars 2” push, CNE will host card tournaments at conventions around the U.S.

“What we’re seeing with ‘Adventure Time’ is that the fans are looking for what’s next and what’s new,” says Yoder. “Being able to build around core characters and tent poles is great to drive one to two consumer product programs per year.”

Hot Topic is on board for an “Adventure Time” collaboration for fall, and DC Shoes will release a line of shoes, snowboards and outerwear tied to the tent poles.

Another exciting proposition for CNE? The re-boot of its “Ben 10” series.

The series first aired in 2006 and became a top-grossing global franchise for Cartoon Network, with more than \$4.5 billion in worldwide retail sales. It aired in 178 countries and in 30 languages, and spawned four different series across 230 episodes and two live action movies.

The new series will go back to the original show’s

roots and center on the 10-year-old Ben Tennyson character as he finds adventure and discovers the mysterious Omnitrix, which gives him alien superpowers.

“The show has been re-invented but still keeps a lot of its classic core attributes intact,” says Yoder. “We’ve seen a trend over the last few years—the dark properties, especially for children, are not resonating anymore. With ‘Ben 10,’ there is still that core feeling of action, but it’s much lighter and has an injection of comedy. It’s what’s always made it really strong. It’s going to be a really exciting launch for us.”

The re-imagined show will hit TVs this fall, with a consumer product program scheduled to begin rolling out the following year.

Playmates Toys is signed on as master toy partner and will bring figures, vehicles, role play and play sets to market.



Lastly in the portfolio is “Rick and Morty,” a property pulled from CNE’s Adult Swim banner.

The animated sci-fi series centers on Rick, a reckless, hyper-intelligent scientist, and his 14-year-old grandson Morty.

For the consumer product program, merchandise draws on the central characters of the animation as well as secondary characters that pop up in the series from time to time but are resonating with viewers.

According to CNE, viewership of season two doubled from season one, with season three (currently on-air) performing well.

The property tends to skew male, with adults and men ages 18 to 24 the key demographic.

And its social media footprint is also holding strong with more than 1.1 million likes on Facebook, 365,000-plus Instagram followers, 182,000 Twitter followers and equally well-performing metrics across Reddit, Tumblr and fan-created accounts.

The product program will hit retail later this year first at specialty, with a roll out to mass likely to hit in 2017/2018.

“The consumer product strategy for ‘Rick and Morty’ is to try to hit the fan base wherever we can with an equally focused retail strategy—we don’t want product to just be out on shelf, we want to make sure we’re telling a story around it,” says Yoder.

On board for merchandise are licensees such as Bioworld, Hyp, Ripple Junction, J!nx, Cryptozoic Entertainment, USAopoly, Astro Gaming, Dark Horse, Funko and more, creating items that span apparel, accessories, electronics, games and puzzles, publishing, home décor and novelty.

“Going into Licensing Expo this year, we really have the largest and widest portfolio we’ve ever had that hits pretty much all demographics—girls, boys, teens, tweens, young men and women,” says Yoder. “There’s truly something for everyone.” ©







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# LOOKING TO THE 'GODS'



**CRAIG CEGIELSKI**  
co-chief executive officer,  
FremantleMedia North America



**ANDREA BRENT**  
senior vice president, licensing  
and franchise management,  
FremantleMedia North America

FremantleMedia North America is building excitement for its brand-new series "American Gods," based on Neil Gaiman's acclaimed novel. And with it, a global consumer product program is being built. **by AMANDA CIOLETTI**

**I**n what is sure to be one of the most highly anticipated premieres of 2017, FremantleMedia North America is deep into the production process for the brand-new TV series "American Gods."

Based on the 2001 award-winning dark fantasy novel of the same name by Neil Gaiman, and with showrunners Bryan Fuller ("Hannibal," "Pushing Daisies" and "Heroes") and Michael Green ("The River," "Kings" and "Heroes") on board, "American Gods" is already generating huge buzz, with a social media following of more than 3.5 million across Facebook and Twitter—independent of author Gaiman's huge social reach. (Gaiman alone has nearly 2.5 million followers on Twitter.)

"I am thrilled, scared, delighted, nervous and a ball of glorious anticipation. The team that is going to bring the world of

*American Gods* to the screen has been assembled like the master criminals in a caper movie: I'm relieved and confident that my baby is in good hands," says Gaiman.

All this, and the show hasn't even wrapped production of its 10-episode first season yet.

"This is a novel that is beloved and has an absolutely rabid fan base," says Craig Cegielski,

co-chief executive officer, FremantleMedia North America. "Neil Gaiman has set this tone in the community that fans just eat up and love."

The central plot of the series posits on a war brewing between old and new gods—the traditional gods of mythological roots from around the world are losing believers to an upstart pantheon of new gods that reflect modern society's love of money, technology, media, celebrity and drugs.

The series is set to air on the Starz network, and casting has added fuel to the social media fire.

Tapped for the series are Ricky Whittle as the lead

protagonist Shadow Moon, an ex-con who becomes bodyguard and traveling partner to the mysterious Mr. Wednesday (Ian McShane); Emily

Browning as Shadow's wife Laura Moon; and Crispin Glover as the seemingly omniscient leader of the new gods, Mr. World. Other casting highlights include Cloris Leachman as Zorya Vechernyaya, Peter Stomare as Czernobog, Chris Obi as Anubis, Mousa Kraish as The Jinn, Sean Harris as Mad Sweeney, Yetide Badaki as Bilquis, Bruce Langley as Technical Boy and Jonathan Tucker as

**FREMANTLEMEDIA**  
NORTH AMERICA





Low Key Lyesmith.

"When you watch the actors inhabit the characters, it really is a joy. The writing is beautiful and the scripts are magical, and when you get these people on the screen, it is truly engaging," says Cegielski. "The way that Michael and Bryan have unpacked the characters in the show allows for a very sustainable series across several seasons."



And creating a

sustaining franchise is the ultimate goal, says Cegielski.

"The moment that we brought Bryan and Michael on board and sold the series to Starz, I activated the idea about how to maximize this opportunity. Everything that you can imagine when you discuss a franchise comes to mind with this series," says Cegielski. "We have initiated every aspect of the consumer product side of the business, and have had conversations about everything from slot machines down to the coin that Shadow Moon carries with him. There is so much fan-made product out there already—it's an engaging book. I've never experienced a show that is more connected to its audience with more passion."

Despite how early the series is in rollout, a thoughtful consumer product program is already in the works, with several partners already signed on to support the property.

"American Gods' dark and epic storyline, complex characters of old and new gods and fantasy elements translate very nicely into key categories such as publishing, apparel, games, gaming, social expressions and costumes, while also lending itself to novelty and collectible products such as figures, trading cards, prop replicas and the like," says Andrea Brent, senior vice president, licensing and franchise management, FremantleMedia North America.

Chronicle Books is signed on for publishing for a hardcover behind-the-scenes look at the filming of season one; and Dark Horse has been tapped for a variety of novelty and collectible products including sculpted coin replica pins, lenticular posters and cards, playing cards, 3D crystal laser-etched cubes, optical illusion products, barware, embroidered patches and journals.

First rollout of product is expected to be available in 2017, following the series' premiere.

According to Brent, Fremantle is building this program with an eye to worldwide distribution and is exploring

additional opportunities with potential partners across key categories. There are also plans to expand offerings as the series progresses.

"The property has a great heritage, and our goal is to develop a consumer product program that resonates with its existing fan base and with newcomers who will soon discover 'American Gods' through

this highly anticipated series," says Brent. "We are laying the groundwork for a global franchise."

Fremantle says that the fundamental message of the series and its storyline is something that will echo across all cultures and is one that, despite being originally written more than 15 years ago, is still as relevant today as ever.

"The novel is incredibly relevant today because we inadvertently find ourselves worshipping or being slaves to our devices—we've drifted a bit from our traditional faiths that we have brought over to America and that used to give us that sense of purpose and the ability to sit in quiet contemplation, pray and feel a connection to a higher power," says Cegielski. "The new gods in the book are saying the same things that we are in the show: humanity

is in a state of dysfunction and experiencing a borderline existential crisis, and these devices and the distraction they provide keep humanity in its place. And that's what the new gods provide—distraction. The old gods provided a transaction—hope or luck or strength... there was a real sense of personal connection and a human result that people would actually receive from giving faith and prayers." ©





# SUPER preschool HEROES

Entertainment One recently launched the series "PJ Masks" around the world. Now the series is ready to be supported at retail with a comprehensive consumer product program. **by BARBARA SAX**



**ANDREW CARLEY**  
head of global licensing,  
Entertainment One Family



**JOAN GRASSO**  
vice president, licensing, North  
America, Entertainment One

Last October, Entertainment One Family launched the brand-new, CGI-animated preschool TV series "PJ Masks" on Disney Channel and Disney Junior in the U.S. and it rolled out around the world last fall, and to build on that success, eOne is now launching a comprehensive multi-platform strategy that includes new licensed consumer products.

Produced in partnership between eOne and Frog Box, and in collaboration with the French animation studio Team TO, Disney Junior and France 5, "PJ Masks" is based on the picture book series *Les Pyjamasques* by Romuald Racioppo. Already, the series has proven to be a hit with its core audience of children ages 2- to 7-years-old, has attracted 1.6 million viewers across its premieres and won an average audience share of 29 percent among the 2 to 5 age group.

"Preschoolers love the idea of superheroes, but many of those properties are unsuitable for this audience," says Andrew Carley, head of global licensing, Entertainment One Family. "'PJ Masks' answers the needs of this audience perfectly with original content that appeals to both preschool boys and girls and

their parents with its message of empowerment."

The series brings the popular superhero genre to a preschool audience with heroic and fantasy-based storylines focused on themes that resonate with this age group, such as friendship and teamwork. Storylines follow the nighttime adventures of three young friends who transform into their dynamic super alter egos—Catboy, Owlette and Gekko—when they put on their pajamas and activate their special animal amulets. The three friends solve mysteries and learn important lessons along the way.

eOne's comprehensive, integrated digital strategy, which includes music videos, a free mobile app and an array of online content, is designed to further increase kids' engagement with the show.

"The Internet is vitally important to building the brand by connecting with kids away from the television series," says Carley.

The "PJ Masks" website offers a range of interactive elements including craft activities and character profiles. In May, two video games, "Hero Training" and "Night Time Ninjalinos," were launched online and for iOS devices.





In the works is a series of music videos that include the series' characters alongside lyrics that relate to the positive messages that are integral to the series. The music videos will be distributed to the show's broadcasters to use on-air and online via eOne's website and social channels, further driving viewership.

The success of the show has laid a strong foundation for a full-scale consumer product program that will complement the series, which will begin rollout in Q3.

"We anticipated the launch of our consumer products to be next fall, but the show was so popular, we moved up the date," says Joan Grasso, vice president, licensing, North America, Entertainment One. "We're very excited that, in such a short period of time, the show has really caught on and consumer demand for product is high."

Grasso says product will reach stores in time for back-to-school, with a broader assortment in on shelf for the holiday season. A rollout of merchandise in Canada is also on the schedule and will occur simultaneously.

"Retailers will be supporting the program in a big way," says Grasso. "We have some exclusive launches planned for back-to-school and we will widen the product rollout for holiday."

Just Play, which has been named the global toy partner, is gearing up to launch a collection of figurines, collectibles and play sets in the U.S. for the holiday season.

Simon & Schuster, the master publisher for North

America, will launch a 5- to 6-item product line of storybooks and picture books this year, and the program will roll out to international publishing partners in 2017.

Other licensees on board include Wonder Forge, which will produce games; Cardinal Industries for a line of puzzles; Crayola for art and creative play products; and Cra-z-Art for crafts and activities.

On the softline and accessory side, eOne is partnering with Happy Threads for an apparel and accessory line that will include sleepwear, socks, underwear and more; Disguise for Halloween costumes; and Accessory Innovations for back-to-school products including lunchboxes, backpacks and bags.

More deals are in the works, with licensees soon to be announced in the bedding, home décor, consumer electronics and accessories categories.

"We have at least 30 licensees signed and plan to have a global licensing program in place by the end of 2017," says Carley.

"The TV show has given us the great exposure in the markets that you need to launch a successful consumer product program, and we plan to build the brand globally in markets where the property is strong," says Grasso.

To further bolster "PJ Masks" in the global marketplace, eOne has plans for experiential events and marketing, such as costume character meet-and-greets and events at National Superheroes Day, to engage fans outside of the broadcast series. ©





# A Universal Language



The Emoji Company, launched just three years ago, is now taking licensed products to every corner of the globe. **by AMANDA CIOLETTI**



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chief executive officer and  
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chief executive officer, Global  
Merchandising Services

**M**arco Hüsches saw an opportunity and he took it. In 2013, Hüsches founded The Emoji Company on the trademark ownership of the term “emoji”—you know, those pictographs you use a million times a day when texting? As it turned out, no one had optioned the term yet, only the proprietary images that are encoded in mobile operating systems is under protected patent. But the term itself? Up for grabs.

Armed with some fierce entrepreneurial spirit, Hüsches built The Emoji Company and its 2,600-image strong library of vectorized icons to become the visual and product representation of the term, available for licensing in all categories.

“I always loved to communicate via those small icons on my phone,” says Hüsches, who serves as the company’s chief executive officer. “I thought it would be great to create an expressive and powerful brand that would solely concentrate on using icons to communicate with its customers. Using

pictographs doesn’t have any boundaries or language barriers and is the perfect way to communicate and to express ourselves. While the whole world goes digital, we wanted to transport iconic feelings and emotions back into the analogue world to create meaningful physical and tangible products under one umbrella brand.”

As of today, Hüsches has secured the trademark to the term “emoji” in more than 60 countries including the U.S.,

Canada, Japan, South Korea, China, Hong Kong, Singapore, India, Brazil, Mexico, Chile, Argentina, Colombia, Russia, Israel, New Zealand, Australia, Thailand, Iran, South Africa and Egypt.

With an eye toward licensing and merchandising, Hüsches also built a strong network of global agents to help extend the brand to the varied territories. Throughout the world, the official Emoji brand is represented by agencies such as Global Merchandising Services in the U.S. and the U.K., Bavaria Media in G/A/S and Benelux, Big Merchandise in South Africa, Exim Licensing in Latin America, Haven Licensing in Australia and New Zealand, Medialink in China and Universal Music in Spain, Portugal, France, Italy, Russia, Turkey and Greece.

Now, with the IP secured and a global agent network in place, Hüsches





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and The Emoji Company are beginning to roll out the first consumer product programs in all territories. “Overall, 2016 has been an exciting year so far,” says Hüsges. “When we started [officially licensing and building a consumer product program] last year, we were at the very beginning and took a relatively small booth at Las Vegas’ Licensing Expo. But after the show, everything picked up speed. Immediately we signed 12 agents for representation, and now the Emoji brand is represented in more than 60 countries around the world. Within a short time frame, we have signed close to 100 licensees from many countries globally and across all categories.”

The concept—seemingly so obvious—was not one that had been implemented yet at retail in any structured way, and it became very clear that consumers of all ages and nationalities were eager to wear, decorate and cook with Emoji-branded product. After all, more than half of all adults in the

world own a smartphone, according to *The Economist*, and by 2020, it’s projected that that number will top 80 percent. That’s a lot of people who are now, then, intimately familiar with the Emoji brand by halo effect.

“The Emoji brand is one of the most unique and universal licenses,” says Barry Drinkwater, chief executive officer, Global Merchandising Services, which manages the brand in the U.S., the U.K., Ireland and India.

“It’s not gender-specific and it’s not age-specific—I don’t think there’s ever been anything like it. The brand



has legs for a long time.”

Licensees began to come on board as soon as the brand was up and running.

“In the beginning we had to convince people that the Emoji brand was a license they needed to take,” says Drinkwater. “But when we showed licensees that there were these unique graphics available, it suddenly became real.

The Emoji brand is not a movie or pop group or TV series—it’s something in the digital world and not the physical. I think licensees thought that they could just go ahead and execute [the concept] on their own, but what they didn’t realize was that Marco owns the family of Emoji trademarks.”

Early adopters of the brand in the U.S. include more than 19 partners such as Sakar

for electronics, FAB Accessories for gifting, Jay Franco for housewares,

Unique for paper products, LF USA for sleepwear and Bentex for sportswear, among many others.

In the U.K., the licensee roster is equally as robust with Specsavers on board for eyewear, Ravensburger for toys and games, Coneen and Misirli for nightwear, Dreamtex for homewares, Wow Stuff for gifting, Danilo for paper products and many more.

And retailers have been receptive to the Emoji brand as well, once they realized its major potential.

“One of the first licensees that came on board for the Emoji brand was Sakar, which began launching electronics exclusively at Toys ‘R’ Us in the U.S. in October 2015,” says Mary Kean, licensing director, U.S., Global Merchandising Services. “Slowly we’ve built up a program that is now starting to take off at retail. July is a target date and when







we will start seeing Emoji product expand in the U.S. to retailers such as Walmart, Bed, Bath & Beyond, Kohl's and Target. It's been an incredible reaction in the U.S. at retail."

Jens Drinkwater, licensing manger, Global Merchandising Services, echoes Kean.

"In the U.K., we've had a similar first experience with licensees and retailers that the U.S. did," he says. "Emoji is a language that allows people to communicate, and the breadth of the assets that it has is very important. Not only do we have something that is identifiable across multiple age groups, but it is also appealing because the images travel around the world and people everywhere are aware of what they mean and what they stand for."

In the U.K., major mass retailers such as Argos, Asda, Boots, John Lewis, Primark, Tesco and Topshop have taken on Emoji product.

"I have never seen such creative minds come together," says Kean. "The licensed items that are coming out into the marketplace are some of the most fun items I have seen in a very long time, and I think the retail sales are showing that customers are reacting well to it."

And clearly the brand is not just for the U.S. and the U.K.—it's appeal and marketability is markedly global. According to Hüsages, this year and into 2017, retail around the globe will see hundreds of SKUs roll out, perhaps even thousands.

"A typical brand will build up in a particular country and then slowly work its way around the world," says Hüsages. "But Emoji, to be quite honest, is the opposite. It's everywhere at the same time. You don't have to hold back on certain markets."

Other markets that are performing well for the Emoji brand include Spain, Portugal, France, Germany, Mexico, Brazil and Colombia.

"We are not building The Emoji

Company for the short term and to create opportunistic business—this can really be an evergreen brand," continues Hüsages.

Categories for the brand are also wide reaching, with no clear leader in any market, but of course, says The Emoji Company team, apparel is a strong performer. The brand is available across apparel categories such as outerwear, sleepwear, underwear, footwear, bags and backpacks and automotive accessories, but also includes categories such as bed linens, stationery, personal care, confectionery, toys and plush, party goods and more.

Promotions are also a well-performing piece of business for the brand.

"Promotions are something we are doing all over the world, and heavily in the U.S. and Mexico," says Hüsages. "We have licensed our icons for commercials as well, including a leading phone company in Germany. The great thing about the Emoji brand is that it can be used for consumer products but also promotions and advertising purposes—

it's a unique prospect to be able to use one single brand across such diverse purposes."

The future, then, is very bright for The Emoji Company.

An Emoji TV series and online game are also in the works, a logical next step for the brand and for Hüsages, who also holds the entertainment rights and who has worked in the gaming and animation industry for more than 20 years.

"Right now we have 135-plus licensees and are currently working on very big global partnerships, so the aim is to manage the potential of the brand and build quality, expressive products that meet retail demand and eventually move the brand into other price models and categories while expanding into other markets like Eastern Europe and Russia," says Hüsages. ©



## 'Masha and the Bear'

# Takes on the World



With instant success in Russia and a rapid expansion into other European countries, "Masha and the Bear" is poised to take the U.S.—and the rest of the world—by storm.  
by ERICA GARBER

**D**espite a global financial crisis several years ago that affected multiple industries, "Masha and the Bear" powered through and continued to draw strong ratings—as well as strong licensed merchandise sales—achieving a stable level of income and success, according to Vladimir Gorbulya, head of licensing, "Masha and the Bear," and vice president, Animaccord.

The Russian property is considered to be a relatively new project in the Animaccord family, with the first episode of the series only launching in September 2009 and the first season finishing production in 2012 due to the complex quality of the cartoon's 3D animation. However, once the first season was completed, the studio immediately began to work on designing and creating the second season, believing "Masha" would continue to be successful.

"For many of our media and consumer products partners, there was enough to believe in [based on the] huge potential and energy of 'Masha,'" says Gorbulya. "By 2012, the brand had already partnered with such world-renowned companies as Ferrero, Danone, Simba Dickie, Panini, KIKI, Turner and more."

The "Masha" licensing program kicked off with publishing and toys, but by 2013, the brand had already secured more than 100 licensees for more than 50 product categories in Russia and CIS.

Ferrero featured the brand on a range of its consumables products including Kinder Surprise and Nutella, the Panini Group produced a range of sticker albums for Russia and the Ukraine and Egmont International debuted an expansive line of books, stickers and wooden puzzles in Denmark, Sweden, Hungary and Turkey, among others.



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## “Masha and the Bear”

That same year, the property also became a YouTube phenomenon. Today it boasts more than 900 million monthly views and more than 6 million subscribers for a lifetime view count of 12 billion over the course of five years.

By 2014, the show's first season was picked up by a number of European countries and began to generate a huge demand for licensed products, particularly in Italy and Germany.

Today the series is stronger than ever and has achieved a stable level of income and success in Russia and the CIS region, says Animaccord.

On a global scale, “Masha and the Bear” is also raking in strong numbers, particularly in Italy where licensed consumer products sales top nearly \$60 million. In the region alone, Maurizio Distefano Licensing, the brand's Italian licensing agent, has secured multiple licensees in categories ranging from toys to food and beverage for the brand, including partnerships with licensees such as Perletti for umbrellas, rain boots and ponchos; Denver Bike for children's bikes; Crayola for markers, coloring sets, activity sets and more; Swiss Eyewear Group for sunglasses; Acqua Sant'Anna for fruit juices, iced decaffeinated tea and water; PreGel for a variety of ice cream flavors; and EMA for a live show.

Beyond Italy and Russia, the brand has secured even more deals over the past several years including publishing programs in Europe, Latin America and Asia with Egmont, Panini, Fabbri Editori, Hachette, Penguin Random House, Big Balloon Publishing, Carlsen and KV&H, among others.

As one would expect with so many licensees, the brand's consumer



products range boasts strong numbers as well.

The children's series' product lineup currently features more than 2.6 million toys sold in its launch year

with Simba Dickie, the brand's master toy partner in Europe, MENA and Turkey, raking in more than €20 million in sales across Europe.

Additionally, the brand has sold 1.2 million stationery items in nine months in Portugal; 1.1 million confectionery goods in Italy in 2015; more than 670,000 games and puzzles in Italy, Iberia, France and the U.K. in 2015; 429,000 party good items in Italy; 86,000 puzzles in six months throughout Europe; and 37 million Kinder Milk Slices in four months.

However, despite the brand's continued success in Europe and rising success in MENA, it is only just beginning to scratch the surface when it comes to expanding to the U.S. and Latin America.

“Masha and the Bear” currently airs on Netflix in the U.S. and on six channels in Latin America including Cartoon Network and Boomerang.

Animaccord has already begun its trek into the Latin American licensing market through its TV coverage with Turner and Televisa. The two partners are currently playing a key role in increasing awareness for the brand throughout the region, according to Gorbulya. But once a demand is met, the brand will expand with a larger consumer products lineup in the region.

Meanwhile in North America, the studio is in the middle of selecting additional media partners to support the brand's growth, awareness and popularity.

Animaccord has also tapped Spin Master to be its master toy partner in North America and will debut a soft launch of merchandise at Toys ‘R’ Us this year, with a larger consumer products line planned for the toy retailer next year.

Furthermore, the studio is planning to continue the brand's global expansion with two spin-off series titled “Masha's Tales” and “Masha's Spooky Stories,” and a third season of the original series is in the works for completion by mid-2018, which, according to Gorbulya, will potentially lead to a fourth season or even a full feature film.

The first spin-off, “Masha's Tales,” has already been completed and is airing on TV networks; while “Masha's Spooky Stories,” is currently in production and will wrap production by the end of this year. ©





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# CHINA'S SHINING STAR

China's movie marketing maven, Mtime, moves into merchandising.



by STEVEN EKSTRACT  
group publisher, License! Global

Kelvin Hou is a man on a cultural mission. Hou's mission is to legitimize the business of movie merchandising in China. Hou's company Mtime has become *the* movie marketer for Hollywood blockbuster franchises in China.

Ten years ago, Hou founded Mtime to be the Fandango/IMDB/Rotten Tomatoes of China, and it's been nothing but growth for the company ever since.

With a resume that includes Microsoft, Hou understood early on how technology, and in particular the Internet, was changing the way Chinese consumers would make purchasing decisions. He also understood that consumers' interest in certain movies or genres of films could be fine-tuned through software to market specific films and sell tickets—and eventually merchandise—online. Taking his love of the movies and coupling it with his understanding of technology and data mining, Hou created Mtime with the goal of enabling Chinese consumers to learn about movies through film reviews and critic's ratings, creating a massive database of film synopses dating back to 1905, all alongside the ability to buy movie tickets online.

As Mtime's services grew, Hou built a consumer database that now boasts 160 million active users per month, each of which turn to Mtime for reviews, industry data and coverage of everything Hollywood.

In addition to their offices throughout China, Mtime has created its own media outlet in Los Angeles, Calif., staffed with six full-time entertainment reporters who cover movie premieres, film festivals, celebrity news and all things Hollywood, which is in turn shared with Mtime's users who have an unquenchable desire for all things entertainment, but lack the ability to tap into Western news media or social media outlets like Facebook, Twitter or Instagram due to Chinese government regulations.

The next natural step in movie marketing, then, was for Hou to launch high-quality, licensed movie merchandise to the Chinese market for the first time.

Mtime's foray into movie merchandising began in 2014 as they began securing the licenses for movie franchises as well as retail distribution through three tiers of distribution—online retail, in-theater merchandising kiosks and mall-based retail pop-up shops.

In 2015, Mtime partnered with China's largest theater chain owner and mall developer, Dalian Wanda Group, to install retail kiosks in Wanda's largest theaters to sell merchandise both sourced directly by Mtime and licensed movie products from third-party licensees like Hasbro, Mattel and more. The same is true with its online merchandise sales and its mall pop-ups.

In addition to Mtime's B-to-C business, Mtime also has created a B-to-B business model that enables it to communicate directly with retail theater partners that sell Mtime merchandise. Participating theaters can see how movie ticket sales are performing for a particular film by market, as well as place orders directly for merchandise. This is done through the "Mtime Pro" app, which launched last December at the Mtime Licensing Summit in Sanya, China.

There are two major market factors that provide Mtime with a huge business advantage in China. The first is the fast-paced growth of the Chinese movie business. By 2017, the Chinese box office will eclipse the North American box office in revenue.

Second, and the most critical to its success, Mtime has the advantage of being first to market as both a master licensee and retailer for Hollywood film franchises and local Chinese films. Couple this with Mtime's ability to mine its database of users for movie-going preferences and purchasing patterns, and you have a recipe for a very successful retail business.

For years, the largest obstacle for movie merchandising in China has been the profusion of counterfeit (and often times very shoddy) movie merchandise. Hou points to the high-quality of the products that Mtime markets, as well as Mtime's ability to move a movie license from concept to completion in less than four months. Given the short window from the time a Hollywood or foreign film is approved for screening in China by the Chinese Government, Hou has ingeniously created an infrastructure for his licensing business that allows Mtime to utilize their vast design resources and exclusive Chinese manufacturers to create quality items quickly and efficiently, and enables Mtime's partners to purchase the products directly from Mtime's app.

At a recent Mtime licensing showcase in Beijing, China, Hou detailed to a room of more than 800 partners the creativity behind Mtime's licensed product offerings by deconstructing some classic films and showing how they were influenced by great classic art, making the point that licensees must use some sort of artistry when interpreting licensed products from films.

So then, what is next for Mtime? Given their early adopter status, their data-driven business model and the continued growth of the movie-going population in China, the sky is really the limit for the company. Other areas that Mtime is exploring now as natural extensions of its merchandising business will be promotional opportunities between films and Chinese packaged goods companies, as well as other movie brand extensions. ©





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